Saturday, August 25, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 258 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Visa offices of 14 embassies told to leave by Dasma Village homeowners **METRO** / A18

Consul in San Francisco in hot water for human trafficking **NEWS** / A5

KC Concepcion: From endorser to performer **SAT SPECIAL** / F1

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

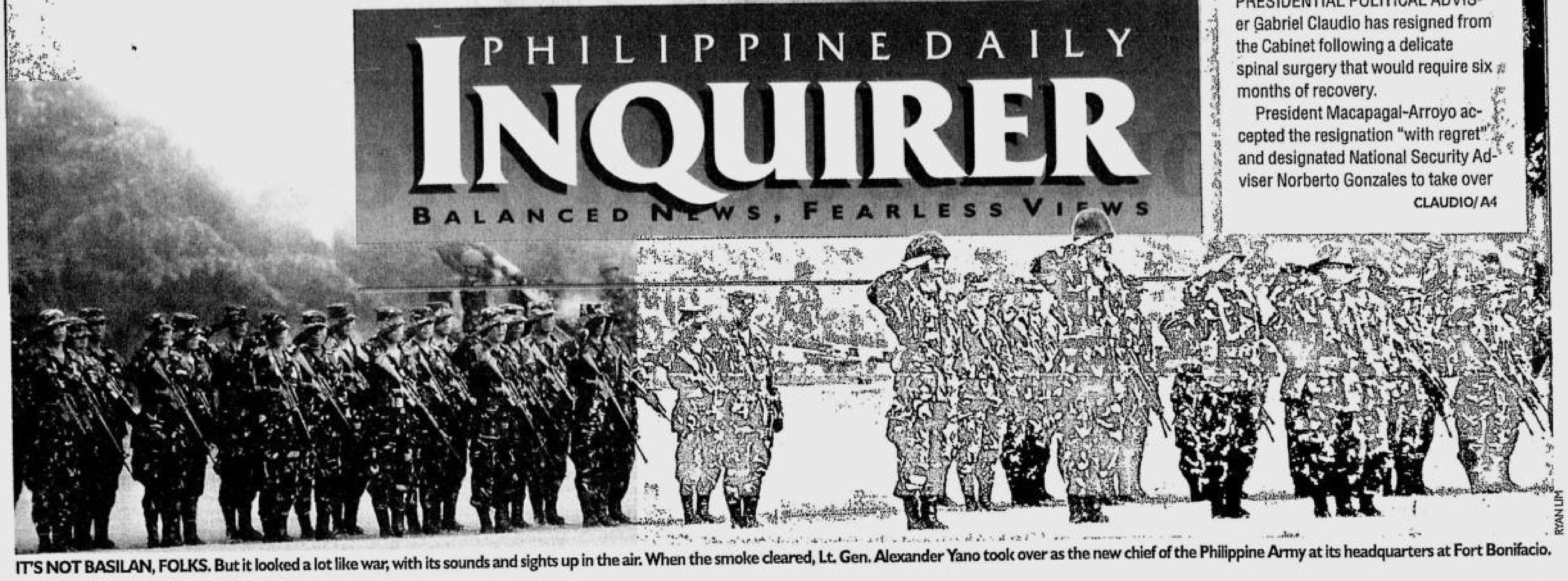
Claudio quits Palace, cites spinal surgery

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICAL ADVISER Gabriel Claudio has resigned from the Cabinet following a delicate spinal surgery that would require six months of recovery.

President Macapagal-Arroyo accepted the resignation "with regret" and designated National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales to take over

CLAUDIO/ A4


RYAN LIM

IT'S NOT BASILAN, FOLKS. But it looked a lot like war, with its sounds and sights up in the air. When the smoke cleared, Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano took over as the new chief of the Philippine Army at its headquarters at Fort Bonifacio.

4 Cabinet men on graft list

Palace denies sitting on 90 cases; it's only 35, Ermita counters

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

FOUR CABINET OFFICIALS have been recommended for punitive action by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission for graft-related offenses, Malacañang said yesterday.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita did not identify the four officials but said they were in the list of 35 cases—not 90—recommended for sanctions by the PAGC and pending review in Malacañang.

He did not identify the others or how high up they were in the official hierarchy.

Ermita denied there were 15 Cabinet-rank officials facing punitive action.

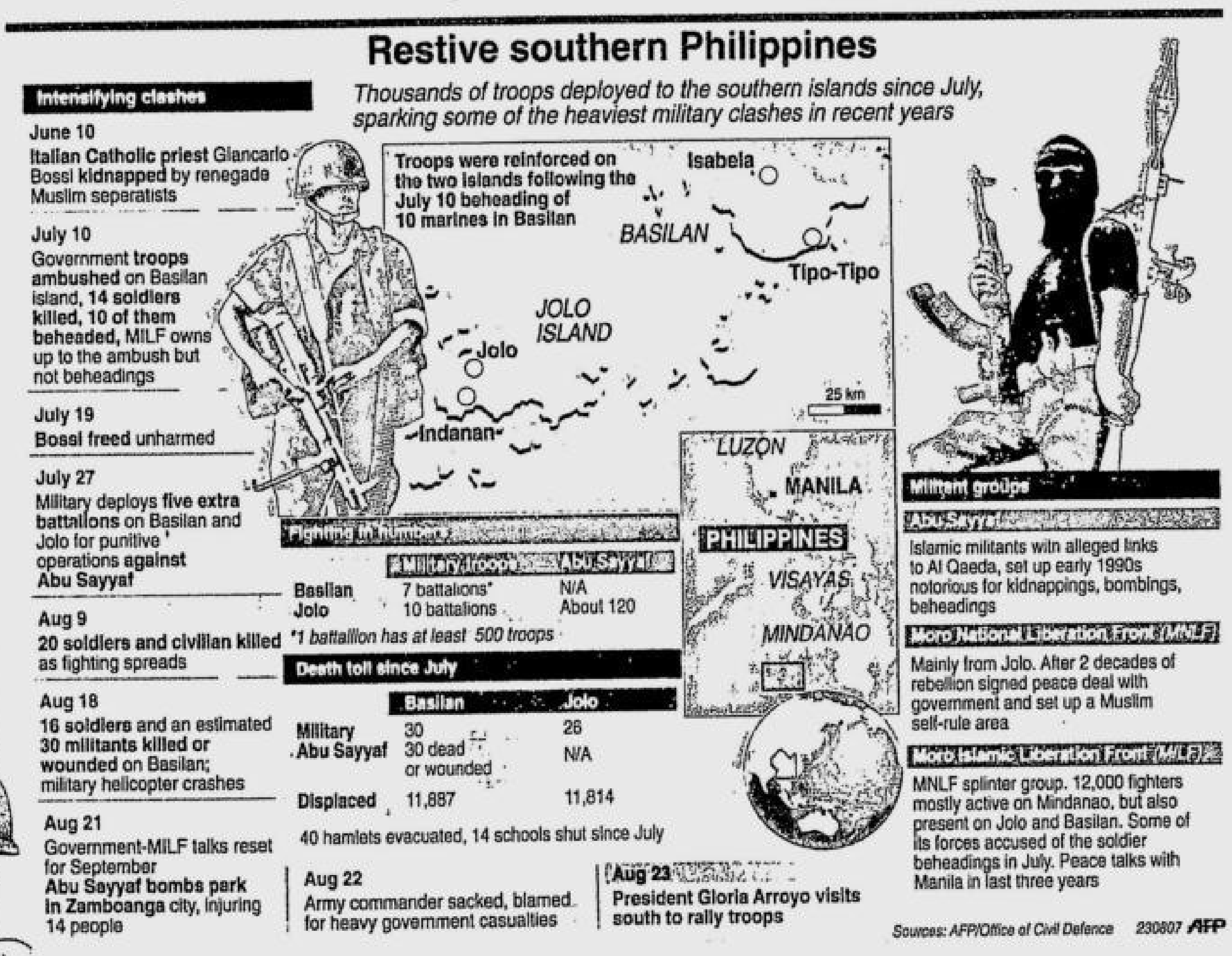
"We have 24 main Cabinet (officials). If there are pending cases (against 15 of them), what would happen to the government? That is definitely not true," Ermita said.

PAGC Director Charito Alvarado had told the INQUIRER that 15 of the cases involved

4 CABINET/ A6

Jesus, I Trust in You

NO ATHEIST IN THE FOXHOLE: While the main troops are set to launch an offensive against the Abu Sayyaf in the jungles of Tipo-Tipo, a team of soldiers tightly secures Isabela City. The INQUIRER photographer spots one of them patrolling around the city's Catholic church on Friday which is Sacred Heart day for the faithful. EDWIN BACASMAS


Restive southern Philippines
Thousands of troops deployed to the southern islands since July, sparking some of the heaviest military clashes in recent years
Intensifying clashes
June 10
Italian Catholic priest Giancarlo Bossi kidnapped by renegade Muslim seperatists
July 10
Government troops ambushed on Basilan island, 14 soldiers killed, 10 of them beheaded, MILF owns up to the ambush but not beheadings
July 19
Bossi freed unharmed
July 27
Military deploys five extra battalions on Basilan and Jolo for punitive operations against Abu Sayyaf
Aug 9
20 soldiers and civilian killed as fighting spreads
Aug 18
16 soldiers and an estimated 30 militants killed or wounded on Basilan; military helicopter crashes
Aug 21
Government-MILF talks reset for September
Abu Sayyaf bombs park in Zamboanga city, injuring 14 people
Aug 22
Army commander sacked, blamed for heavy government casualties
Aug 23
President Gloria Arroyo visits south to rally troops
Troops were reinforced on the two islands following the July 10 beheading of 10 marines in Basilan
Isabela
BASILAN
Tipo-Tipo
JOLO ISLAND
Jolo
Indanan
25 km
LUZON
MANILA
PHILIPPINES
VISAYAS
MINDANAO
Fighting in numbers
Military troops | Abu Sayyaf
Basilan | 7 battalions* | N/A
Jolo | 10 battalions | About 120
*1 battalion has at least 500 troops
Death toll since July
Basilan | Jolo
Military | 30 | 26
Abu Sayyaf | 30 dead or wounded | N/A
Displaced | 11,887 | 11,814
40 hamlets evacuated, 14 schools shut since July
Militant groups
Abu Sayyaf
Islamic militants with alleged links to Al Qaeda, set up early 1990s notorious for kidnappings, bombings, beheadings
Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)
Mainly from Jolo. After 2 decades of rebellion signed peace deal with government and set up a Muslim self-rule area
Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)
MNLF splinter group. 12,000 fighters mostly active on Mindanao, but also present on Jolo and Basilan. Some of its forces accused of the soldier beheadings in July. Peace talks with Manila in last three years
Sources: AFP/Office of Civil Defence 230807 AFP

SC sets precedents, grants brods' protection

By Leila B. Salaverria

AFTER HOSTING AN UNPRECEDENTED summit on political killings and disappearances last month, the Supreme Court established another "first" by extending protection to two farmer-brothers who allegedly escaped detention and torture in the hands of the military.

In an en banc resolution, Chief Justice Reynato Puno yesterday issued an order barring agents of the Armed Forces and the defense department from arresting or harassing Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo, who on

SUPREME/ A6

WORLD HAPPINESS INDEX

Danes, Swiss happiest; Pinoys in mid-range

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS—The tiny Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan long ago dispensed with the notion of Gross National Product as a gauge of well-being. The king decreed that his people would aspire to Gross National Happiness instead.

That kernel of Buddhist wisdom is increasingly finding an echo in international policy and development models, which seek to establish scientific methods for finding out what makes us happy and why.

New research institutes are being created at venerable uni-

DANES/ A8

Columnist draws universal ire over insult to OFWs, quits job

A LIFESTYLE WRITER HAS been hounded out of her job by death threats and hate mail after she wrote a travel piece many readers found insulting to millions of Filipinos who work abroad.

Malu Fernandez told Agence France Presse she quit her job as a columnist at the Manila Standard Today newspaper and People Asia magazine after her article "From Boracay to Greece!" provoked international outrage.

The travel piece, which appeared in the June edition of the magazine and later in modified form in the newspaper, recounts her mock horror at finding herself in economy class surrounded by Filipino maids reeking of cheap cologne.

COLUMNIST/ A4

China bars wife of RM awardee from coming to RP

BEIJING—CHINESE AUTHORITIES on Friday barred the wife of an imprisoned human rights activist from leaving the country to accept a humanitarian award in the Philippines on his behalf, a friend of the woman said.

Yuan Weijing had hoped to pick up the Ramon Magsaysay Award on Aug. 31 for her blind husband, Chen Guangcheng, a self-trained lawyer who helped farmers with grievances to file court cases and who also exposed government abuses of China's one-child policy.

Yuan's passport and telephone were confiscated as she attempted to pass through security at the Beijing airport to fly to Manila, according to Hu Jia, an advocate for people with AIDS, who himself has been under house arrest for months.

Chen and compatriot Chung To, an AIDS activist, have been selected to receive the Magsaysay Award for Emergent Leadership.

Five more people from China, Nepal, India, South Korea and the Philippines are receiving the award named after the late Philippine president and considered Asia's version of the Nobel Prize, in a ceremony set Friday next week at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Some 263 individuals and organizations who work in Asia, including this year's honorees, have been cited for the award in various categories since it was

CHINA/ A8

BSP Q3 survey: Business upbeat, cautious

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL BUSINESSMEN REMAINED UPBEAT but slightly more cautious on the business outlook in the third quarter despite the onset of a severe dry spell and the volatility in the global financial markets, the latest quarterly survey by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) showed.

Out of every 10 respondents in the BSP's third quarter business expectations survey, business firms which were optimistic outnumbered those which were pessimistic by four, resulting in an overall business confidence index of 40.9 percent.

This was the fourth straight quarter that the business confidence index remained at the 40-percent mark. It was up by 19.2 points compared to the year ago level, as respondents cheered a string of favorable factors including the stable domestic macroeconomic environment and the strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

Compared to the second quarter, however, the business confidence index fell by 5.5 points as respondents anticipated a slowdown in production due to seasonality factors as well as a softening of the US economy due to problems in its subprime housing market.

BSP Q3 SURVEY/ A6

DOCTOR ROCKER! BIGAT!!!

Queen rocker gets Ph.D. in astronomy

LONDON—QUEEN GUITARIST BRIAN May was awarded a doctorate on Thursday, more than 30 years after he first began studying a highly specialized area of astronomy.

May first started his thesis—titled

QUEEN/ A8

EZ2
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(All in exact order)

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon, Western Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers or thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/01/01/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

'Wipe out rebels in 3 years'

By Michael Lim Ubac

TAGBILARAN CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered state security forces to end "all armed rebellion" by communist insurgents, Moro secessionist rebels and terrorists before her term ends in 2010.

"I have specified a timeline—three years—to end armed rebellion in the Philippines," said Ms Arroyo, referring to the "three fronts" that her administration was currently engaged in.

The commander in chief branded the "enemies" of the state as "barbarians" who "will try to erase our democratic way of life, but they will not succeed."

Addressing a peace summit for Central Visayas, President Arroyo ordered the Armed Forces of the Philippines to "evolve a strategy of rapid conclusion to address armed rebellion, with the National Security Council providing policy direction on communist insurgency, Muslim secessionism and sheer terrorism."

"They will try to scuttle progress, not by rewriting economic blueprint, for it is an exercise too complex for barbarians, but through acts of terror and a war of attrition, yet to no avail," Ms Arroyo said.

She called for a review of the reservist and reserve force development program of the AFP, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) "and other similar programs consistent with the doctrine of a citizen's army enshrined in the Constitution."

Remember Dagohoy

Describing Boholonos as descendants of Francisco Dagohoy, who led the longest revolt in the country during the Spanish era, the President enjoined local officials here in declaring "our resolve to defeat terror and rout the enemies of democracy."

"Your ancestors did not take savagery sitting down. Instead they fought back. We, too, will fight back and repel the incursions of insurgency and terrorism.

will not stop until bandits find no more nook to hide in the land they have blighted, and no sanctuary to seek from people they have terrorized and used as shields," she said.

Ms Arroyo said her two-pronged approach in Basilan and Sulu—a full military offensive coupled with humanitarian assistance to displaced families—would be the template for her overarching goal of ending all rebellions.

"But we do not, and we will never, employ the bloody means terror employs to compel forced obedience of their obsolete ideas and outrageous demands. We, on the other hand, will employ all means available in the arsenal of democracy to crush those who wish to transplant the roots of radicalism in our land," she said.

Ms Arroyo arrived here late Thursday from Zamboanga City and Basilan where she visited the troops pursuing Abu Sayyaf rebels blamed for the deadly attacks on government forces in Basilan and Sulu.

After inaugurating the P8.5-million Loboc Children's Choir Theater and the P2.5- million access road to the theater in the nearby town of Loboc, she went straight here yesterday to address the closing ceremonies of the two-day Local Peace and Security Assembly (LPSA).

LPSA participants presented to Ms Arroyo an action plan to address the insurgency which included an offer of amnesty to communist rebels and "their legal or aboveground organizations," ceasefire, support of local peace talks, review and re-establishment of the ROTC, and adoption of anti-poverty policies.

Military steps up offensive vs Abu

ISABELA, BASILAN—THE MILITARY has been ordered to step up its offensive against extremist rebels in Mindanao, the country's armed forces chief said Friday.

"I have standing orders to hit every confirmed (location). The Abu Sayyaf will be dealt with as fast as we can, as decisively as we can," AFP chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. told reporters a day after President Macapagal-Arroyo visited frontline troops in Basilan.

The government has massed 17 battalions of Marines and infantry on Basilan and Jolo islands to hunt down and destroy the al-Qaida linked Abu Sayyaf.

The group has been blamed for the worst terrorist attacks in the Philippines and the July 10 ambush slaying of 14 Marines, of which 10 were beheaded.

Although the Abu Sayyaf only number about 58 in Basilan and about 120 in Jolo, according to Esperon's estimates, the campaign so far has inflicted some of the worst battlefield defeats on the military in recent years with scores of soldiers killed or wounded.

At least 57 government troops have been killed since the fighting began.

Finish them off

Both the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) have rejected military allegations they were aiding the Abu Sayyaf group.

Vice President Noli de Castro yesterday said the military should finish off the Abu Sayyaf so that development in Mindanao, particularly in Basilan, could begin.

De Castro urged the government to continue the ongoing military offensive in Basilan against the Abu Sayyaf group as stopping this could demoralize the soldiers who are pursuing the terrorists.

"What our soldiers need at this very crucial moment of the war is reassure them that what their doing in Basilan is right and good for the country," De Castro said. "And, in my view, the very reason why the military offensive was ordered conducted is still there."

Esperon said the large military presence, estimated at more than 10,000 soldiers, enabled the government to quarantine and enforce a "total gun ban" on the two mainly Muslim provinces.

He said the campaign aims to "put off balance" the Abu Sayyaf so its forces will not be able to launch any terrorist activities, and give way to the second phase of the operations which will focus on development.

Building and repair

The government plans to send two army engineering battalions to Jolo and another battalion to Basilan within the next two weeks to build and repair roads, health centers and schools, he added.

Nearly 24,000 people have fled their homes on both islands to escape the fighting, relief officials said.

But militant groups doubt the motive for the military offensive, saying it could be a ruse by the government to preempt a proposed cut in US military aid to the Philippines, its No. 1 ally in Asia.

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said it wasn't ruling out the possibility that government troops were stepping up operations against Moro insurgents to highlight the government's need for more military funding.

"The seemingly endless war in the South is geared toward justifying more US military assistance. It may be a desperate move to counter the reported reduction of almost two-thirds of the previous military aid," Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. said.

The government, he added, had to give the US "a reason" to continue providing and increasing military assistance. "It must show the US government that the 'war on terror' is alive and well and progressing in the country," he said. *AFP with reports from TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana*

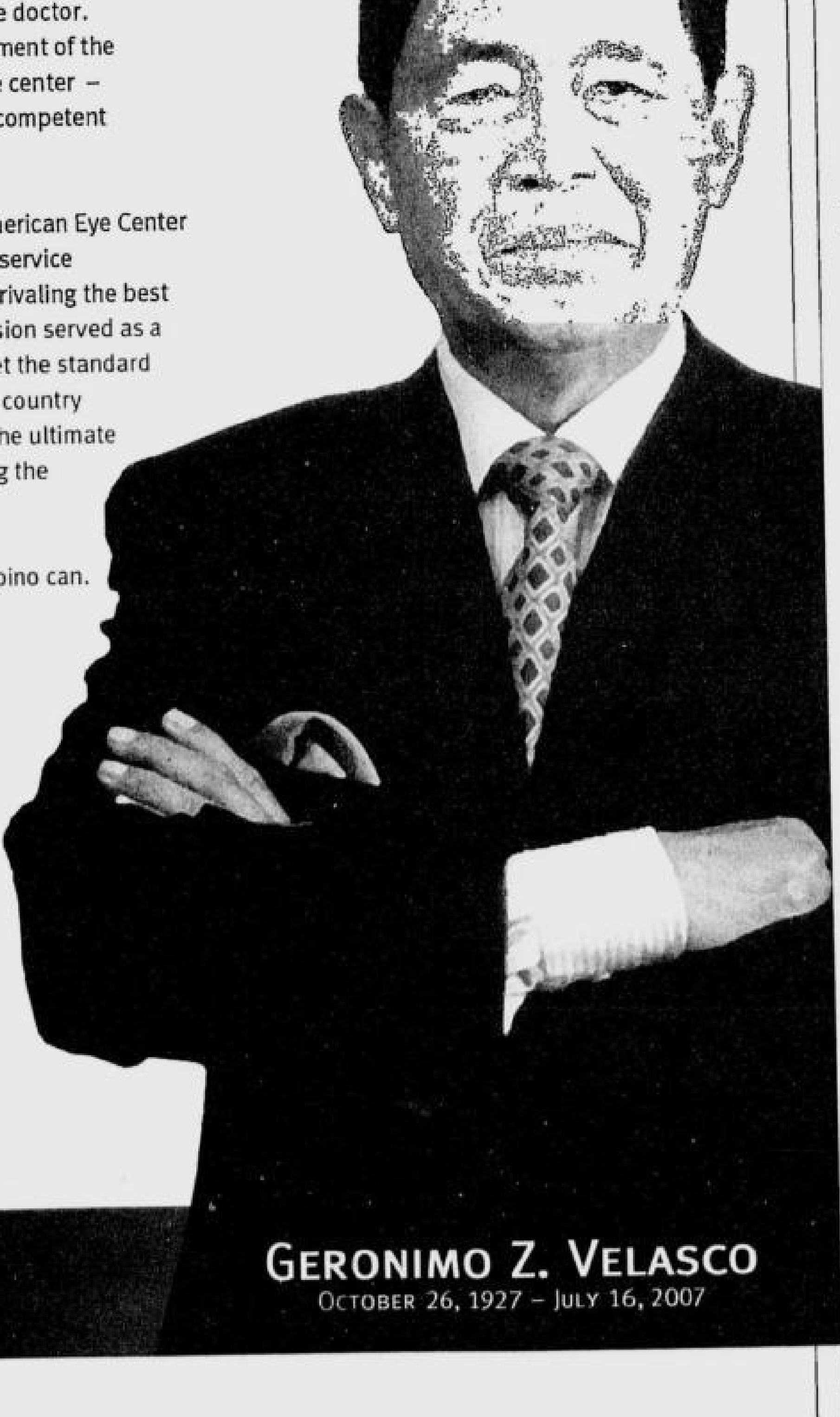
The 70's – an era of a looming oil crisis – one man believed the Philippines could rise above it all. He pioneered the development of our own hydro-electric and geothermal energy sources, leading to the creation of the Philippine National Oil Company and the Department of Energy.

The 90's – questioning why travel to the United States was critical for his Glaucoma – this same man believed in the expertise and talent of the Filipino eye doctor. He supported the establishment of the country's first refractive eye center – "world class technology in competent Filipino hands."

Over a decade later, the American Eye Center has transformed into a full-service state-of-the-art eye facility rivaling the best centers in the world. His vision served as a trailblazing impetus that set the standard so many eye centers in the country have sought to embody – the ultimate beneficiary of course, being the Filipino patient.

One man believed: the Filipino can.

We salute his vision.
We honor his legacy.
We treasure his memory.



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PROJECT: LIGHTHOUSE

'Who ordered Danga to wiretap Defensor?'

By Gil Cabacungan

SEN. PANFILO LACSON YESTERDAY claimed that a high-ranking Cabinet official close to Western Command (Wescom) chief and former head of intelligence Vice Admiral Tirso Danga was the one who ordered that phone surveillance be undertaken on key opposition and administration personalities in 2004.

In an interview with television station ANC, Lacson surmised that the Cabinet official whom he did not name most likely had a rift with former Cabinet secretary Michael Defensor, who himself was included among those covered by the wiretapping operation codenamed Project: Lighthouse.

"Who ordered Danga? We should find that out. We can only speculate at this time. I can only speculate the order could have come from somebody at the level of Cabinet member, someone who had access to Danga and is close to the President," said Lacson.

Lacson said that while "we can zero in on a few people," Defensor's inclusion among those to be wiretapped was the key to knowing who the master of the operation was.

"What prompted me to have that kind of speculation is the involvement of Defensor. Who among the Cabinet members had a tiff with Defensor? Did Defensor and (Executive Secretary Eduardo) Ermita get along pretty well during those times? Defensor was the odd man out among the group that was wiretapped," said Lacson.

When asked if he believed Ermita was the brains behind the eavesdropping, Lacson said: "I'd rather keep it to myself, but I have my suspicions. There are so many things that remain discoverable. That's why we really need to proceed with the hearings."

Lacson is calling on colleagues to reopen investigation into the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Ermita was defense secretary starting October 2003 until August 2004 when he was replaced by lawyer Avelino Cruz. Ermita and Defensor had several run-ins during the latter's stay in the Palace because the multi-tasking presidential chief of staff encroached into many territories.

"I don't know if Danga is already retired. Maybe we could get this information from him. If there's a lot of compartmentalization in this particular operation, only Danga would know who ordered him to do the wiretap operation," said Lacson.

Lacson said he also believed that President Macapagal-Arroyo was kept in the dark about the covert operation. "No way (that it could have been the President]. They started in 2003, but it went on."

Josee Perlas-Mayo; 61

JOSEPHINE "JOSEE" PERLAS-MAYO, WIFE of Deputy National Security Adviser Gen. Victor Mayo, passed away yesterday at the age of 61.

Mayo, daughter of Col. Jose Z. Perlas and Christina C. Perlas, both deceased, is survived by her husband, her daughter and son-in-law Peni and Mark Choi, her son and daughter-in-law, Trius and Ruby Mayo and her grandchildren, Joseph, Michael, Aaron, Khayla, Kyle and Jeremy.

Her remains lie at the Santuario de San Antonio Capilla de la Virgen at Forbes Park, Makati City.

There's no work: Locsin defends absentee solons

By Norman Bordadora

A LEADER OF THE MAJORITY in the House of Representatives has defended the chronic absentees among his colleagues in the lower chamber saying their attendance was not needed in the first place.

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin, chair of the House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms, said Tuesday night there was still no legislative work since the standing and special committees have yet to be completely organized.

"The premature publication of the names of absentee members during plenary sessions is uncalled for because at present the body has no bills yet to consider and vote for on the floor," Locsin said in a manifestation during the House session.

Thus, he said, there is no reason for seasoned legislators to stay in the hall.

Locsin rose to defend alleged absentee House members. They include Negros Occidental Rep. Julio Ledesma, Capiz Rep. Frederick Castro and Mountain Province Rep. Victor Dominguez who were reported to have attended only three out of the first 10 sessions.

"This is not the time to enforce a sanction as to do so this early would only mean trivializing the situation. The members should wait until a bill is under consideration or a vote is to be taken ," the Makati lawmaker said.

Castro defended his absence, saying that as a member of the Electoral Tribunal he need not be physically present.

But he admitted missing a session because he had to be confined in a hospital.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, however, argued that House rules mandate members to attend sessions whether or not there are bills to tackle.

With the chamber's leadership organization still incomplete four weeks after Congress convened, the House majority early this week got a reprimand which it had no choice but to accept.

Speaking on the floor Wednesday night, Deputy Minority Leaders Darlene Custodio of South Cotabato and Teofisto Guingona III of Bukidnon took turns in chiding the House leadership for its failure to complete chairmanship elections and memberships after a month.

"Madame Speaker, may we know why the House has yet to be fully organized a month after Congress opened?" Custodio said on the floor during the session which Deputy Speaker Amelita Villarosa presided over.

Custodio said that since she was first elected in 2001, this was the first time that the committee on appropriations was not yet fully organized on the day the government's proposed budget was received by the House.

Speaker Jose de Venecia received the P1.2 trillion budget proposal from Malacañang. But committee on appropriations chair Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman has yet to be elected in the plenary and its projected 115 members yet to be completed.

COVENANT FOR ENVIRONMENT—Sen. Loren Legarda and Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn (right) join hands with other environmentalists—Integrated Bar of the Philippines vice president Rogelio Vinluan, Sister Aida Vasquez of the United Nations Enviroment Programme and enviromental law expert Antonio Oposa—during yesterday's signing of the covenant for environmental protection at the Manila Polo Club. Oposa, a UNEP awardee, was the guest speaker and lecturer.

Green group scores Atienza on Puerto

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY Joselito Atienza is setting a "dangerous anti-environment precedent" by attempting to talk Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn out of his plan to ban mining in the city, a green group said yesterday.

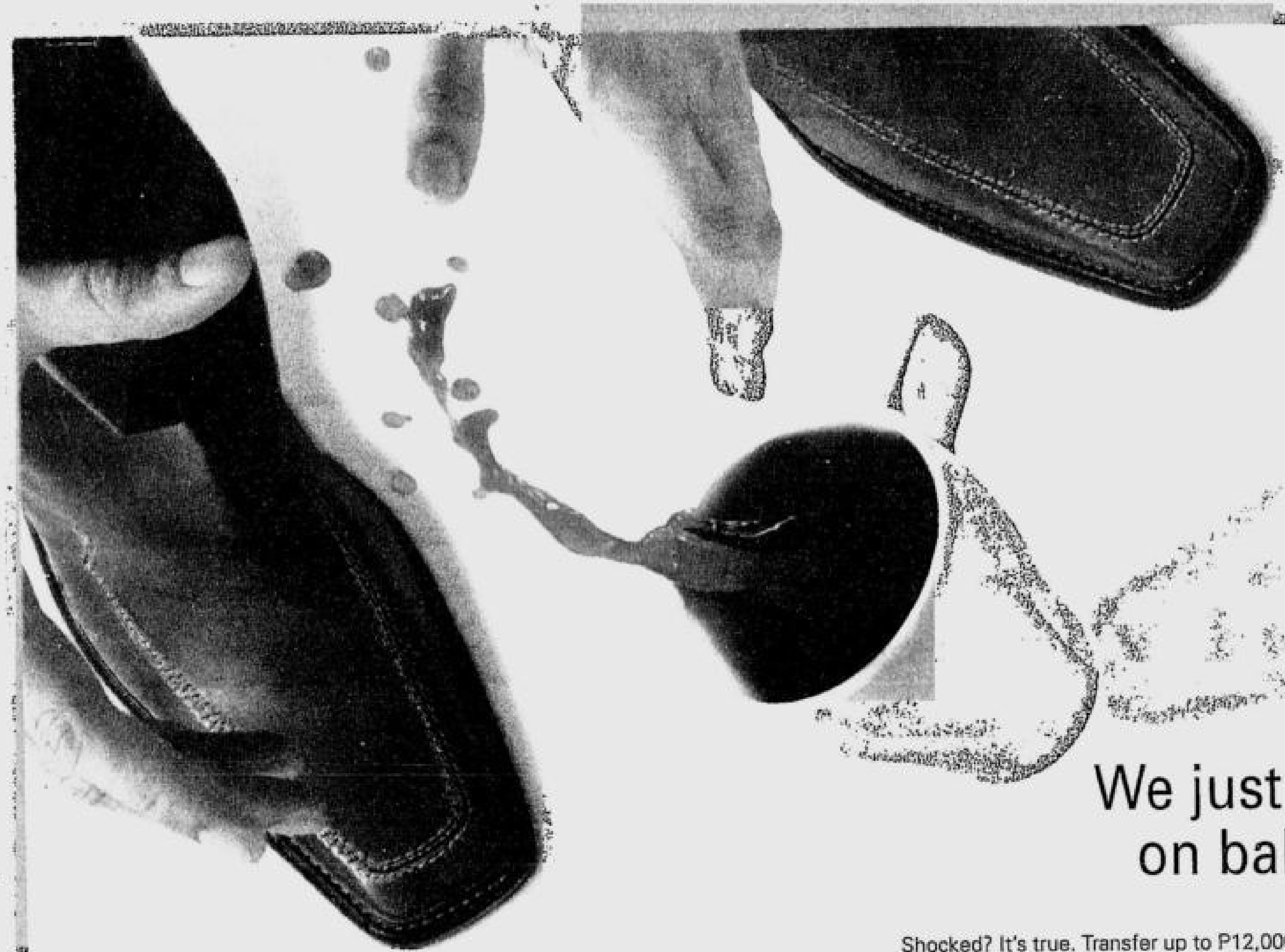
"Secretary Atienza should be ashamed of himself for attempting to reverse initiatives to protect the environment and people's welfare," Kalikasan PNE national coordinator Clemente Bautista said in a statement.

Kalikasan PNE stands for Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment.

It's not Hagedorn, but Atienza who is sending the "absolutely unpatriotic" message that the Philippines "is a no holds-barred paradise for large-scale mining giants," the group said.

Atienza had vowed to convince Hagedorn to change his mind about his plan even as he warned that the ban would scare away prospective investors, and result in lost benefits for "ordinary folks."

Hagedorn declared Tuesday he would disapprove applications for large-scale mining operations in the city, which is rich in nickel deposits, until his term ends in 2010.



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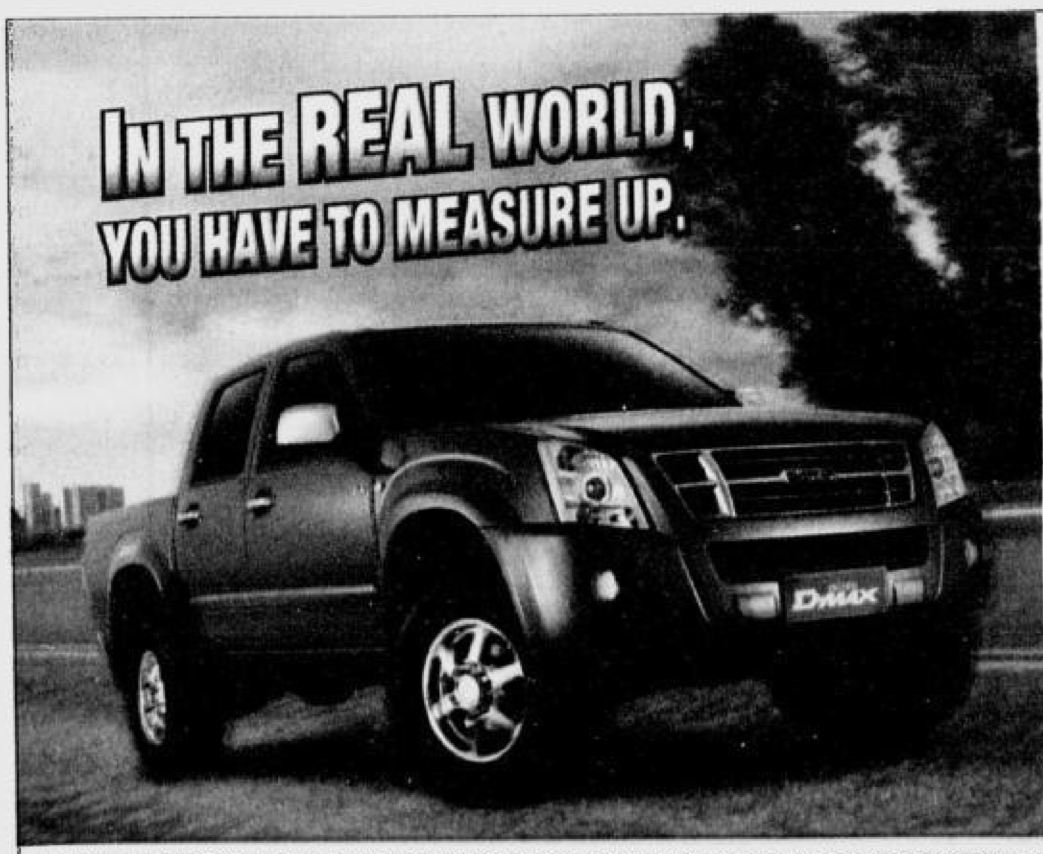

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ISUZU 10 ANNIVERSARY
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Claudio quits Palace, cites spinal surgery

From page A1

Claudio's post in an acting capacity, Malacañang said yesterday.

"Yes, I've resigned to avail of as much time and opportunity as needed to fully and permanently recover from my back ailments for which I underwent spinal surgery last Aug. 8," Claudio said in a text message.

Claudio, 52, underwent a procedure called decompressive laminectomy to correct his congenital scoliosis.

One of the most advanced surgical procedures for spinal defects was performed on Claudio by a team headed by his identical twin brother, Dr. Rafael Claudio, chair of Medical City's orthopedics department.

The Aug. 8 procedure lasted for five and a half hours.

The operation involved releasing of "entrapped spinal nerves" and an instrumented fusion "to stabilize the lower spine using titanium implants," according to Dr. Claudio.

Not hereditary

Congenital scoliosis is the abnormal development of the spine resulting in a missing portion, partial formation, or lack of separation of the vertebras.

Unlike idiopathic scoliosis, it is not believed to be hereditary.

Dr. Claudio said it would take four to six months for the "bone fusion to happen and mature."

Two weeks ago, before he was discharged from the hospital after the operation, Claudio had told the INQUIRER he "only asked for a month's leave from the President."

History of surgeries

"We're still haggling about that," Claudio had said then.

Explaining his illness at the time, Claudio said there was "renewed instability and nerve compression in the upper lumbar section that had been causing me severe lower back pains."

He said his doctors needed to operate to stabilize and decompress the areas affected by the congenital scoliosis of the lumbar spine, among other spinal maladies.

Claudio had previous surgeries in 1976 to correct the congenital scoliosis of the lumbar spine and in 1977 and 1978 for treatment of an ensuing chronic osteomylitis (bone infection).

Heavy work load

As presidential political adviser, Claudio had oversight functions over the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, the Office of External Affairs and the Office of the Political Coalition Affairs.

Antonio "Tonypet" Albano was recently designated head of the OPCA after serving as a spokesperson for the administration Team Unity in the May 14 senatorial elections.

Claudio was one of the most active Palace officials during the last election campaign, heading an arbitration committee which dealt with problems of coalition members running for the same positions at the local level.

Appointed presidential political adviser in 2001, Claudio also served as general campaign manager for Ms Arroyo and the K4 team in the 2004 presidential elections.

List of the stricken

He was also the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development in charge of Region 8, or the Eastern Visayas Region, composed of Biliran, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Northern Samar, Samar or Western Samar and Southern Leyte.

Claudio is the latest in a list of Cabinet officials who have fallen ill while working for a workaholic President.

The list includes then Executive Secretary Renato de Villa, his successor Alberto Romulo, then Presidential Management Staff chief Rigoberto Tiglao, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, Presidential Management Staff head Cerge Remonde, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

In June last year, Ms Arroyo herself was admitted to St. Luke's Medical Center for what doctors said were acute stomach pains. The following month, she returned to the hospital for treatment of the flu.

Gonzales: No one says no to the President

By Michael Lim Ubac

TAGBILARAN CITY—NO ONE says no to President Macapagal-Arroyo. At least, not a loyal political lieutenant like National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales.

He said "yes" when she named him a temporary replacement to resigned Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio.

"I don't know how I can do it. I don't know anything about Gabby's work," he quipped to reporters at the closing session here of the Local Peace and Security Assembly for Central Visayas.

"It's just that you don't say no to your President," he said. "You're given a task. We try."

He said his assignment was only temporary and in a concurrent capacity.

"I talked with Gabby and asked him if he's just malingering," he said.

Gonzales said he could use his new post to seek the help of local and congressional officials in ending the communist insurgency.

Local officials will be given "a prominent role under the peace agenda" of the administration, he said.

Columnist draws universal ire online over OFWs

From page A1

"I wanted to slash my wrist at the thought of being trapped in a plane with all of them," she wrote.

The column drew fire from across the universe of online diaries who denounced her for alleged bigotry.

8M Filipinos abroad

Eight million Filipinos, including maids, seamen, construction workers and professionals work abroad and sent a record $7 billion back to the Philippines in the first six months of 2007.

Fernandez at first tried to deflect criticism of her article, saying in a subsequent newspaper column that it was meant to be tongue-in-cheek humor.

"If any of these people actually read anything thicker than a magazine they would find it very funny," she wrote.

"Although it may sound elitist to you the fact is this country is built on the foundation of haves, have-nots and wannabes. One group will never get the culture of the other."

Apology

However, Fernandez said she has since become the "target of death threats, hate blogs, and deeply personal insults" and felt the need to apologize and quit. The Manila Standard Today confirmed that Fernandez no longer wrote for the paper.

"To say that this article was not meant to malign, hurt or express prejudice against the (overseas Filipino workers) now sounds hollow after reading through all the blogs from Filipinos all over the world.

"I am deeply apologetic for my insensitivity and the offensive manner in which this article was written," she said in her personal website.

She stressed it was never her intention to "malign, hurt or express prejudice" against the group. *AFP*

Wanted: Dinner date for Sen. Pia

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. PIA CAYETANO IS LOOKING FOR A date but not necessarily someone who can "outrun, outswim, and out bike" her.

The 41-year old senator admitted to reporters that her love life was zilch since she had spent most of her free time in sports rather than on romantic dinner dates.

"I don't have any [love life]. I devoted to sports the time that I should have gone out dating," said a glowing Cayetano, who is now legally separated from her husband, Ariben "Butch" Sebastian, corporate lawyer, mountain climber and one of the founders of the Philippine Mount Everest team.

Cayetano said she preferred going out with someone who is into sports like her. "He'd most likely get bored if he's not into sports," quipped the statuesque senator who got her good looks from her German-American mother, Sandra Schramm, a former school teacher.

Her younger brother and seatmate at the Senate, Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano wishes her well. He doubts if there are enough men out there who would not be intimidated by his sister.

"She's a good person, a good mother and a good public figure. I hope she gets her wish to meet that someone meant for her soon," said the younger Cayetano. "You don't have to outrun, outswim or out bike her because I know only a few men who can."

Personal life private

Despite rising to prominence making it to the top rung of senatorial winners in 2004, Cayetano has kept her personal life under wraps. Her own website reveals few details about her private life.

A source close to the family, who requested anonymity, said Sebastian and Cayetano agreed on a trial separation shortly after she was elected senator. The two are now legally separated.

They have two young children. Their only son died of a rare disease in 2001 when he was 9 months old.

Cayetano and Sebastian met at the wedding of the former's cousin.

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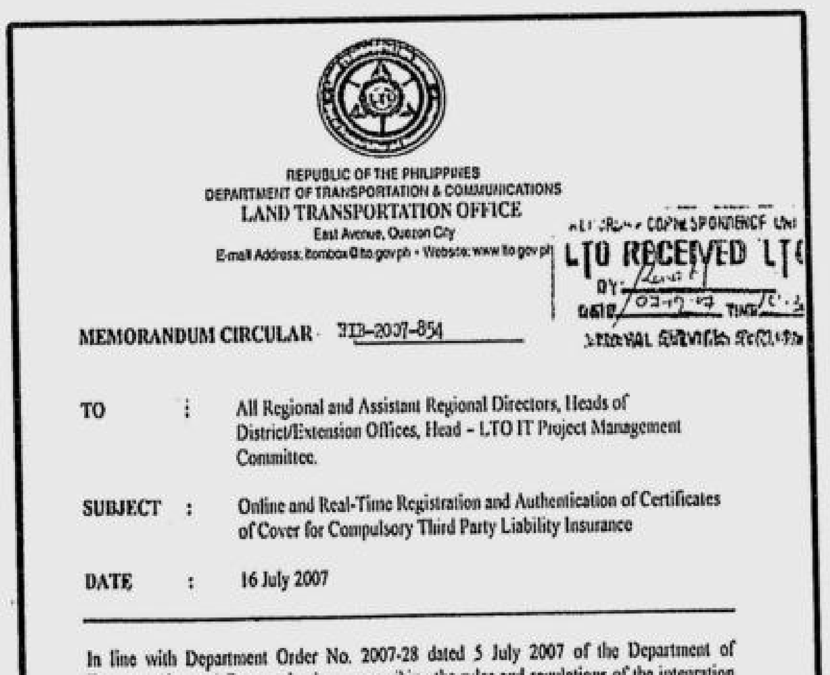

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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR RIB-2007-854

TO : All Regional and Assistant Regional Directors, Heads of District/Extension Offices, Head – LTO IT Project Management Committee.

SUBJECT : Online and Real-Time Registration and Authentication of Certificates of Cover for Compulsory Third Party Liability Insurance

DATE : 16 July 2007

In line with Department Order No. 2007-28 dated 5 July 2007 of the Department of Transportation and Communications, prescribing the rules and regulations of the integration of the issuance and payment of CTPL Insurance with the LTO IT Project's System and Databases; and pending implementation thereof, during the transition period mentioned therein, there is a need to implement an interim verification system, specifically the COCVF.

In view thereof, all LTO officials and employees and other concerned parties are hereby directed to comply with the following:

1. Effective 25 July 2007, only COCs for CTPL that are verified and authenticated online and real-time under the COCVF System shall be accepted,
2. Stradcom shall, as the project proponent of the LTO IT Project, conduct orientation meetings and trainings on the COCVF to all concerned LTO officials and employees;

This Memorandum Circular shall remain effective until: (a) the expiration of the ninety (90) days transition period stipulated in the DOTC Department Order No 2007-28; or (b) the actual implementation of the Integrated CTPL Insurance Program.

For strict compliance.

REYNALDO I. BERROYA
Assistant Secretary

CERTIFIED COPY
JOSSIE M. BORJA
Records Officer

RP consul in hot water for human trafficking

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY—A YOUNG FILipina who came to the United States to work for a Filipino vice consul spent two years in what New Jersey's attorney general called involuntary servitude.

On Thursday, the consul's mother-in-law pleaded guilty to exploiting Arlene Gado, 23, by paying her a fraction of what she was promised and forbidding her to leave the house without her employers.

Prosecutors said Gado agreed to come to the United States in 2005 to work as a nanny in the house of Anthony Mandap, a vice consul in the Consulate General of the Philippines in San Francisco. She was promised $8 per hour for a 40-hour work week and $12 an hour for overtime.

But Attorney General Anne Milgram's office said Gado instead was told upon her arrival in California that she was needed by Mandap's in-laws, Angelita and Norberto Reyes in New Jersey.

Exploited

Gado's passport and visa were taken away, and she was told not to leave the house without family members because she would be arrested.

According to prosecutors, Gado provided continuous care to the incapacitated Norberto Reyes, cleaned the house, cooked all meals and was required to give massages, manicures and pedicures to relatives and friends of the Reyeses.

Gado was paid $250 per month, pay that was increased to $325 in July 2006 when she was required to begin caring for the Reyeses' infant granddaughter.

Gado was able to talk by cell phone to a cousin in Michigan, who contacted New Jersey labor department officials.

"For two full years, the defendant controlled and exploited this victim, taking advantage of her youth and immigrant status," Milgram said. "Human trafficking takes many forms, but the common thread is exploitation of the vulnerable, particularly women and children."

Angelita Reyes on Thursday pleaded guilty to criminal restraint charges. Under the plea, Reyes must pay Gado about $78,000 to make up the difference between what she was paid and what she was supposed to get under her contract.

Angelita Reyes could not immediately be reached for comment on Thursday.

A message left for Mandap at the San Francisco consul was not immediately returned.

In Manila, the Department of Foreign Affairs said it would look into the case.

DFA spokesperson Claro Cristobal said the personnel division had been ordered to determine whether Mandap committed an injustice when he hired Gado, only to be exploited by his in-laws.

"We've not received any official report regarding this incident but we've asked for a report and we'll await that. Meanwhile, the case has been referred to the personnel department for investigation," Cristobal told the INQUIRER.

Cristobal refused to comment on the possibility that Mandap may have abused his diplomatic privilege and committed human trafficking in bringing Gado to San Francisco only to work for his mother-in-law in New Jersey.

AP with a report from Cynthia Balana

Corrections

IN THE AUG. 24 ISSUE, the editorial on Page A12 of the Opinion section—"Everyone's at risk"—misstated the first name of the former military intelligence operative who claimed he bugged the President's conversations with an election commissioner during the 2004 presidential polls. The former operative is retired T/Sgt. Vidal—not Victor—Doble.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 21 ISSUE, an article on Page A22 of the Sports section—"Belasco boosts Welcoat ceiling"—misstated the year when cager Nic Belasco started playing for the Pop Cola team. Belasco was drafted by the now defunct team in 1997—not 1999.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, August 25, 2007
20th Week in Ordinary Time
Louis of France / Joseph Calasanz

1st Reading: Rt 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17
Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12

Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, "The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees sat on the seat of Moses. So you shall do and observe all they say, but do not do as they do, for they do not do what they say. They tie up heavy burdens and load them on the shoulders of the people, but they do not even raise a finger to move them. They do everything in order to be seen by people; so they wear very wide bands of the Law around their foreheads, and robes with large tassels. They enjoy the first place at feasts and reserved seats in the synagogues, and being greeted in the marketplace and being called 'Master' by the people.

"But you, do not let yourselves be called Master because you have only one Master, and all of you are brothers and sisters. Neither should you call anyone on earth Father, because you have only one Father, he who is in heaven. Nor should you be called leader, because Christ is the only leader for you. Let the greatest among you be the servant of all. For whoever makes himself great shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be made great."

Commentary

The book of Ruth is about an outsider named Ruth who is married to an Israelite and has become a widow. She casts her lot with her mother-in-law, Naomi, and returns with her to Israel. Both are widows (a precarious position in the land). Naomi seeks to have Ruth meet one of her kinsmen to marry and settle. She meets Boaz in the field and he instructs her to stay with his women servants and follow field to field to glean. And he soon marries her. She is praised in familiar terms of blessing with a twist that is crucial to note: "He will be your comfort and the support of your old age, for his mother is the daughter-in-law who loves you. She is worth more than seven sons!" Amazing blessing and she is the great-great (many greats) grandmother of Jesus.

An outsider in Israel obeys the law and goes beyond the law to care for her mother-in-law. And in Israel, Jesus is chiding the people to listen to their leaders but not to do what they do. They are hypocrites who lay burdens on others (usually widows and the poor) and who lord it over others and know no humility. Ruth is an alternative model to imitate.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications) & http://www.claretphilippines.org (Claretian Missionaries in the Philippines)

5 RP sailors acquitted

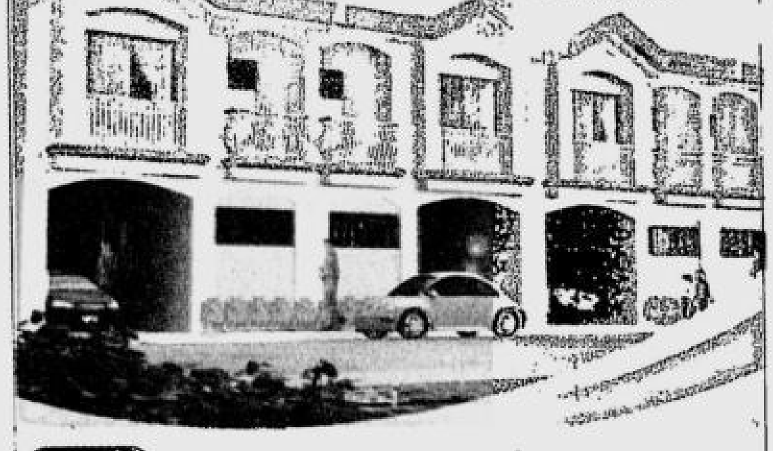
A FILIPINO SHIP CAPTAIN AND four of his Filipino crew have been acquitted of drug trafficking charges by a criminal court in Istanbul, Turkey, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Quoting the report of Philippine Ambassador to Turkey Bahnarim Guinomla, the DFA said that on Aug. 22, the 14th criminal court in Istanbul found no evidence to substantiate the charge against Captain Reynaldo Derige, second officer Julio N. Cagampan, chief engineer Othoniel P. Bungalso, chief officer Alberto Jose and bosun Franciscio E. Pontillas.

The case against Derige and his crew stemmed from the discovery of marijuana which was encased in a metal container and attached to the bottom of the ship Federal Fuji which they were manning.

When the ship docked in Turkey on May 11 this year, it was raised in a shipyard for routine maintenance. Derige saw the metal containing the marijuana and immediately called the attention of the authorities, which act was given weight by the court in acquitting him and the other seafarers.

Following the dismissal of the case, Guinomla asked Mrs. Ana Maria Cristina Oben-Nazareno, Vice President of Wallem Maritime Services, Inc., to help coordinate the early repatriation of Derige. *Cynthia D. Balana*



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4 Cabinet men on PAGC graft list forwarded to OP

From page A1

high-ranking officials who either head government agencies or are members of Cabinet departments.

Without naming names, PAGC Chair Constancia de Guzman yesterday said that at least one of the four Cabinet officials recommended for punitive action is the head of a department.

"We cannot say. Until the Office of the President (OP) has issued an order, we can't talk about it," she said, describing the four as "top ranking officials (because) they hold Cabinet ranks."

"We can name them," De Guzman said. "We can share their information with you, but their cases are still pending. We want to respect their integrity until the OP has affirmed (the PAGC recommendations)."

PAGC's mandate

A PAGC official said that under its mandate, the commission can investigate all presidential appointees—from Cabinet secretaries, undersecretaries, and assistant secretaries, and presidential advisers, to directors and executive directors of all government agencies.

De Guzman spoke in an ambush interview in Tagbilaran City, Bohol, where she accompanied President Macapagal-Arroyo in attending the Local Peace and Security Assembly for Central Visayas.

De Guzman said the PAGC, after an investigation in 2006, had found the four liable for violation of the Anti-Graft Law. It then sent the papers to Ms Arroyo's office, which has yet to affirm or overturn the antigraft body's findings.

Ermita denied an INQUIRER report that the PAGC had expressed frustration at Malacañang's slow action on 90 cases recommended by the commission. The report was based on a talk with a PAGC official.

Sept. 15 deadline

"The President has given a deadline to our legal office to finish all (the 35 cases) by Sept. 15," Ermita said in a separate radio interview.

He said the PAGC recommendations were not final and were subject to review by the legal office of Malacañang.

"The alleged 90 graft cases that remain unacted upon by the OP is highly inaccurate," Ermita said in his statement released by the Palace.

Ermita said De Guzman and other officials of the PAGC had "always been consistent in saying that there are only 35 cases with punitive recommendations that are under review by the OP."

"There is no undue delay in the resolution of these cases because stringent study must be made on these cases as they all involve careers, livelihood and reputation of people and PAGC understands this," Ermita said.

DE GUZMAN: We respect their integrity until OP's affirmation.

ERMITA: Due process must be observed.

Premature disclosure

"For the same reason, OP and PAGC cannot prematurely divulge the names of the officials with pending cases."

Ermita said that from July 2006 to date, 18 presidential appointees had been meted out penalties, including 11 officials who were dismissed from service, six suspended and one reprimanded.

Undersecretary Severo Catura—who was not the source of the original INQUIRER story—yesterday said two officials had been dismissed upon the recommendation of the PAGC. They were Victoriano Calaycay, chair of the National Labor Relations Commission, and Dominador Ferrer Jr., chief of the Intramuros Administration.

Ermita said the PAGC story was "taken out of context."

Not sitting on the cases

"Of course, we are investigating those who have cases from different agencies. But what we are trying to correct is the impression that we have 15 Cabinet-rank (officials) who have cases," Ermita said on radio dzBB.

Ermita also stressed that Malacañang was not sitting on the cases, pointing out that recommendations of the PAGC were not automatically approved by Malacañang.

"That is what we want to correct, that the highest level (of government) is sitting on cases," he said. "My golly, we are not sleeping on graft cases or setting them aside."

"That is what I want to explain, we have due process. All government employees, whether ordinary employees or officials, have their own right to be heard," Ermita said.

Due process

He said the cases were not final until they are approved by the OP and filed before the Sandiganbayan or the Ombudsman.

"I hope many will understand that we do not just act without due process ... We do not want to destroy reputations of people just because of the complaints of a few. We know that some of the complaints come from employees who do not like the officials," Ermita said.

Ermita lamented the leak of the PAGC cases.

"We pity officials whose cases are still under the period of deliberation but are leaked out to the media. Their cases are not final yet but their names have been destroyed," he said.

De Guzman said the PAGC's role was limited to investigation. It can recommend but the Office of the President has the last say.

92 cases

De Guzman said based on PAGC records as of Aug. 23, 2007, there were 36 cases pending before the OP but that according to the Office of the Executive Secretary, only 35 were left as "another affirmation of a punitive case is already in transit."

De Guzman said there was a confusion over the total number of cases forwarded to the OP.

The 92 cases—including those of Calaycay and Ferrer—were investigated in 2006.

"Only four remain pending of the cases investigated and finished in 2006," she said, referring to the cases of the four Cabinet officials.

Of the 92 cases, 31 carried "punitive recommendation."

No hasty action

From January 2007 to Aug. 17, PAGC finished 96 cases and their papers were already forwarded to the OP. They included 40 cases for punitive sanctions, such as suspension or dismissal.

She explained it was impossible for the OP to dispose off all cases in one fell swoop.

"We cannot ... dictate (on the OP)," she said, but stressed that if the President would have her way, she wanted to sack one official per week.

Explaining the slow pace of review, De Guzman said: "We're not stopping. We want to finish at least 10 resolutions per month, and at least five of these should be for punitive recommendations."

She thanked the media for playing an "invaluable role" in the antigraft drive by giving prominence to news about government officials and employees facing punitive sanctions.

Supreme Court sets precedents, grants 2 brothers' protection

From page A1

Thursday filed a petition to be placed under the high tribunal's custody.

Held for 18 months

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said the justices will sit in en banc session next week to tackle the Manalos' request for a full-blown probe of their alleged ordeal, including claims by one of the brothers that he saw two abducted female students also being hurt by their captors.

The petition, filed for the brothers by the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), said the Manalos were held without charges by the military for 18 months.

It asked the high court to appoint a commissioner who would focus on their complaint starting with the inspection of the different places where they had been detained, including military camps.

Marquez noted that the Manalo petition was the first of its kind to be brought before the tribunal, and that the temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by Puno in favor of the brothers could also be considered a first.

Effective immediately, the order was addressed to Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, and all their subordinates including the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu).

It "enjoined (them) from causing the arrest of petitioners, or otherwise depriving, restricting, curtailing or abridging them of their right to life, liberty and other basic rights, as guaranteed under Article III, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution."

It further directed Teodoro and Esperon to submit their comment to the brothers' petition within a non-extendible period of five days.

Marquez said the TRO was issued owing to the "urgency" of the brothers' cry for help, and that the respondents could be cited for contempt if they violate the order.

In their petition, the Manalo brothers said they were abducted on Feb. 14, 2006, in San Ildefonso, Bulacan, and then managed to escape from a house somewhere in Pangasinan last Aug. 13.

Raymond recalled that they were moved to different locations, including the camp of the 24th Infantry Battalion, and that they were tortured almost to the point of death by military agents.

Palparan tagged

Raymond tagged retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan and a Sgt. Rizal Hilario, among other officers, to be behind their abduction. He said these officers were either present in the torture sessions or have directly taken part in their physical and psychological torment.

Raymond also said that while in detention he saw and talked to Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño, both students of the University of the Philippines who had been reported missing. The two women were also tortured by their captors while their companion Manuel Mirino was killed, he added.

The military had denied having the students and Mirino in its custody.

The brothers asked the high court not to give the military, the police and other law enforcement units any part in the protection blanket they were seeking. They also expressed a reluctance to enter the justice department's Witness Protection Program.

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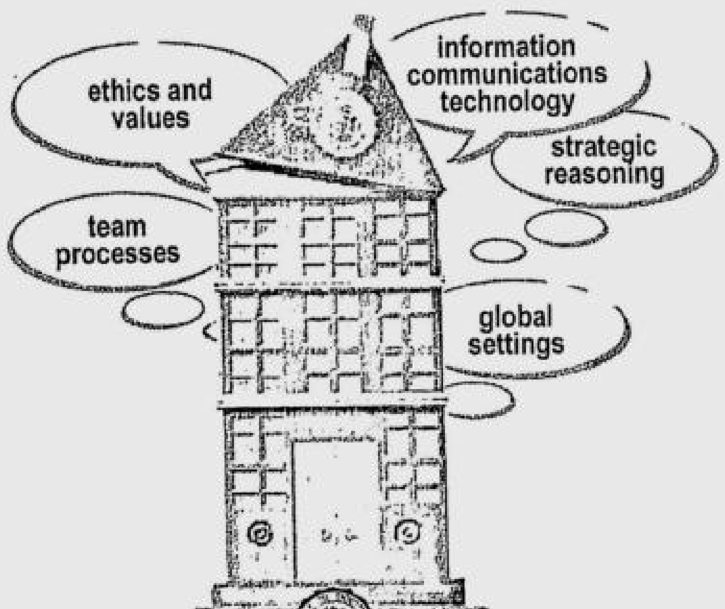

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SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

BSP Q3 survey: Business upbeat but cautious

From page A1

But BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo noted that the concerns on the US subprime housing sector were still not as widespread when the survey was conducted between July 9 and Aug. 10.

The subprime sector extends housing loans to individuals with risky credit ratings.

Other factors cited by the respondents for their slightly more cautious business outlook in the third quarter compared to the second quarter were the following:

- Competition of cheap imports mostly from China.
- Increase in crude oil prices.
- Power and water shortage.

Thus, the outlook for the industry sector was lower compared to the second quarter. Specifically, manufacturing firms noted that production during the third quarter traditionally slackens quarter-on-quarter due to the start of the wet season and the slowdown in consumer spending after the school enrollment period.

Important message

"The important message is for the 3rd quarter of 2007, the confidence index shows continuing buoyancy of business expectations. And for the next quarter, they are even more bullish," Guinigundo said.

For the fourth quarter, the business confidence index climbed to a record 53 percent, the highest level since the survey was first conducted in the second quarter of 2001.

"We always take a look at this business expectations survey as part of the mechanism by which we feel the pulse of the business community as well as the consumers," he said.

The survey had 1,063 respondents which were drawn by the BSP from the Securities and Exchange Commission's list of top 5,000 corporations. The bulk of the respondents came from the industry and services sectors.

With only a few respondents from the agriculture sector among the top 5,000 corporations, Guinigundo noted that the dry spell did not have a large dampening impact on overall business confidence index for the third quarter.

"But the realization that the dry spell could have an impact on economic activity was shown by expectation for inflation to move up," Guinigundo said.

Dry season good for construction

The dry season, although devastating to the farm sector, seemed to benefit other sectors. For instance, optimism in the construction sector peaked at an all-time high of 53.1 percent in the third quarter.

Business sentiment in the services sector also remained strong at 53.3 percent. The confidence index of the hotel and restaurant subsectors also surged, reflecting strong tourist arrivals.

Teresita Deveza, a BSP research officer who presented the results of the survey in a press briefing, said respondents from the National Capital Region were more bullish than their counterparts from areas outside the NCR.

Medium and large-scale firms, particularly the import-oriented firms, were the most optimistic in the BSP survey.

The third quarter is usually a strong season for importation as businesses beef up their inventory in anticipation of higher consumer spending during the Christmas season.

"The sustained high (confidence) indices for the last fourth quarters are consistent with (the country's) high GDP (gross domestic product growth) rates," Deveza said.

"This also indicates that GDP growth rate for 2007 could be in the area of 6.9 percent," she said.

The Philippine economy posted a higher-than-expected growth of 6.9 percent in the first quarter this year, its highest level since 1990.

Access to credit

Based on the survey, businesses also cited an improvement in access to credit, consistent with the uptrend in outstanding loans granted by banks since July 2006.

On the other hand, the employment outlook index for the next quarter rose to an all-time high of 21.1 percent, indicating that respondents are optimistic about employment conditions.

Meanwhile, 28.7 percent of respondent industry firms indicated plans to expand operations in the next quarter.

Many of the respondents also anticipate a strengthening of the peso in the third and fourth quarters.

'Isabela,' the croc, to be freed in wilds

By TJ Burgonio

FOR SEVERAL years, a group of conservationists has been quietly taking on the job of protecting a small population of threatened Philippine crocodiles in the wilds of Isabela.

On Tuesday, after seven years, the Mabuwaya Foundation Inc. will be releasing an adult female crocodile, named "Isabela," to a lake in San Mariano town.

Isabela is possibly one of the few remaining members of the rare crocodile species Crocodylus mindorensis.

"This is a very special animal. It's the most threatened in the entire planet. It's the most in need of conservation action. And it's only found here," Jan van der Ploeg, team leader of the CROC, said in a phone interview.

CROC stands for Crocodile Rehabilitation Observance and Conservation, a joint initiative of the Mabuwaya Foundation, the local government of San Mariano and the Isabela State University (ISU).

"She's a national treasure of the Philippines," he added, explaining the special interest they had taken in the crocodile.

By releasing it to its natural habitat, the foundation hopes that it will find a mate, build a nest, reproduce—and save the species from extinction.

The project is being implemented under the umbrella of the Cagayan Valley Program on Environment and Development (CVPED), a joint research and education program of ISU and Leiden University.

Near extinction

Once widely distributed around the country, crocodiles have been decimated by hunting, killing and habitat destruction, like illegal logging and dynamite fishing.

Isabela's species was thought to be extinct in northern Luzon, until a farmer caught her in Barangay Cataguing, here in San Mariano in 1999.

A freshwater crocodilian, it is a harmless species that does not attack humans unless provoked.

"It's a small crocodile and it does not pose a threat to humans, unlike the potentially dangerous Crocodylus porosus, which is found everywhere in the Philippines," Van Der Ploeg said.

Isabela was turned over to the staff of Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park Conservation Project in Barangay San Jose and reared in a temporary holding pen until she grew to 1.6 meters long.

There are an estimated 50 Philippine crocodiles breeding in wetlands throughout the province. Others can be found in Abra, Apayao and marshes in Mindanao, according to Van Der Ploeg.

Maritime school's pitch

THE FAR EAST MARitime Foundation Inc. (Femfi) has reiterated its commitment to assist the government in producing highly-trained and skilled seafarers while the maritime industry is currently experiencing a critical shortage of able seamen.

According to Femfi president Capt. Constancio Salasab, the Philippines should maintain its reputation as the top supplier of seaborne manpower for the world fleet.

Thus, the only training schools with tested and proven record of producing, world-class seamen should continue in its operation, he said in a press statement.

Femfi has been retraining services and gives additional knowledge in maritime requirements to the Filipino seamen, provide assistance, seminar, upgrading and training services necessary for the promotion of the welfare of the members as per requirement of the shipping industry both domestic and overseas.

SINGAPORE'S STEM CELL RESEARCH PIONEER TO EMPOWER MOTHERS TO HELP SAVE LIVES

Following the birth of a child, many mothers unknowingly allow a life-saving opportunity to become wasted when they let their baby's umbilical cord blood be discarded when it should be stored. They are unaware that a newborn child's umbilical cord blood contains precious stem cells — the key to successful treatment of diseases and saving lives.

Stem cells, most found deep in bone marrow, are the factory of the blood system. They continually make new copies of themselves and can produce a variety of body cell types like red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets, liver and kidney cells, and potentially develop into cells of other organs. Since the first successful transplantation in 1988 in a five year old boy with Fanconi's anemia, cord blood stem cells have been proven to treat a variety of cancers, blood disorders and more than 74 other diseases and immune disorders. If only mothers choose to save their baby's stem cells, they could potentially save a life in the future -- the child's or a family member's.

This is what Dr. Teo Cheng Peng, leading consultant, haematologist and physician at the Haematology and Cancer Centre at Gleneagles Medical Centre in Singapore, has been telling audiences across the globe. He delivers the same message when he flies to Manila (August 27-28), Cebu City (August 29) and Davao City (August 30), to update ob-gyn's and to empower and educate expectant parents on the lifesaving possibilities and utilities of Cord Blood Banking. Dr. Teo is the co-founder and Medical Director of Southeast Asia's largest and pioneering private cord blood banking service company, StemCord Private Ltd.

Why then should expectant parents choose to store their baby's cord blood? Banking the baby's umbilical cord blood stem cells is saving what may be a key component to medical treatments of diseases considered incurable until now. Recent clinical studies show the unique suitability of cord blood stem cells for a number of developing technologies, and doctors particularly see the promise of stem cells in the emerging fields of gene therapy and cellular repair.

Dr. Teo explains the rationale behind cord blood banking. "First, cord blood is one of the richest sources of unique stem cells — the master building block of all other cell types -- which can be readily, cheaply and painlessly collected from the placenta at the time of delivery, without altering the birth process. It poses no risk to the mother or the baby unlike harvesting stem cells from bone marrow, which requires a surgical procedure, usually under general anesthesia, and can cause post operative pain and poses a small risk to the donor.

"Second, stem cells have been successfully used to treat life-threatening diseases such as cancers and blood disorders like leukemia, severe aplastic anemia and β -Thalassemia, and other malignant and non-malignant blood and immune disorders by rebuilding the patient's blood cell-producing system with blood-forming cells. Ounce for ounce, the umbilical cord blood has been discovered to contain nearly 10 times as many of these blood-forming cells and may have a greater ability to generate new blood cells than those found in bone marrow. This suggests that a lesser number of cord blood cells are needed for a successful transplantation."

Today, extensive researches and development are being done worldwide to fully realize the potentials of stem cells in medical treatment — leading to therapies that could be used to treat more diseases like diabetes, heart disease, stroke, kidney and liver diseases, spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis, bone regeneration, Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS), Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

Dr. Teo stresses that storing cord blood is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that can only be done during the baby's birth; once the umbilical cord is discarded, the baby would have lost the chance to help save lives and bring hope to the family's future.

Over 11,000 parents across Southeast Asia have entrusted their baby's cord blood to StemCord's cord blood bank in Singapore. As the pioneer in the Philippines since 2003, StemCord Phils. Inc. has among its valued clientele world-renowned singers Lea Salonga-Chien and Andion Fernandez-Ching, retail mogul Robina Gokongwei-Pe, skin care expert Laura Verallo De Bertotto, entertainment and lifestyle connoisseur Tessa Prieto-Valdes, newspaper publisher Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, lovely actresses Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo and Maritoni Fernandez, Michelle Cariaso, wife of basketball star Jeffrey, Mary Grace Poe Llamanzares, daughter of movie queen Ms. Susan Roces, and presidential daughter-in-law Kakai Manotok-Arroyo.

Learn more about the benefits of cord blood banking and on how to avail of the service at the public symposia to be conducted by Dr. Teo. Please see ad for more details.

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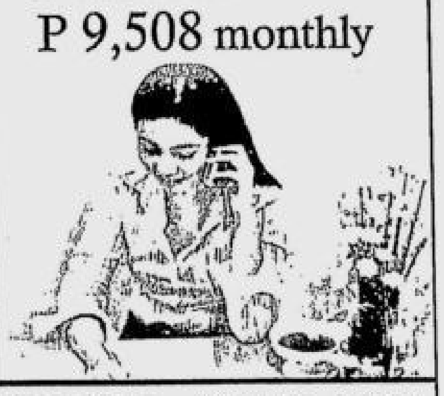

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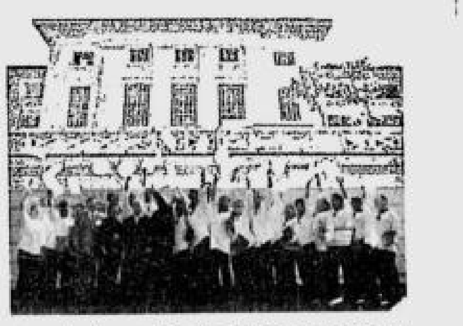

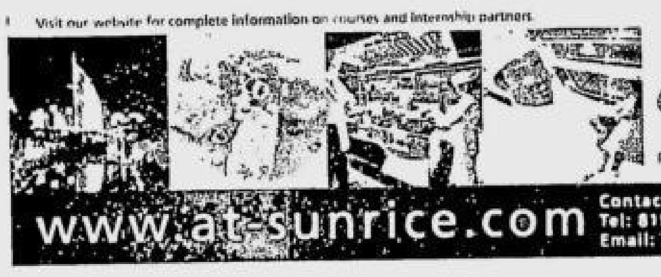

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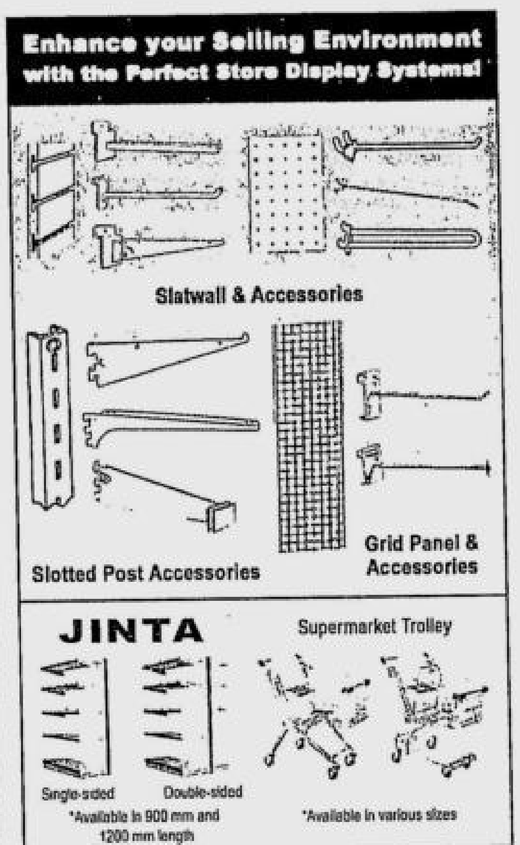

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WORLD HAPPINESS INDEX

Can happiness be taught?

PEOPLE "CAN BE TAUGHT EMOTIONAL resilience, self control, the habits of optimism, handling negative thoughts and much else," Anthony Seldon, Tony Blair's biographer and the headmaster of Wellington College in Britain, wrote recently in the Financial Times.

Seldon is developing happiness courses, working with the Institute of Well-being at Cambridge which was founded last November.

Ruut Veenhoven, who created the World Database of Happiness in 1999, says that with the right combination of individual choices and government policy, nations can raise their happiness quotient by as much as 5 percent. *AP and Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

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China bars wife of RM awardee fro

From page A1

established in 1957. Each awardee receives a certificate, a medallion and a cash prize of $50,000.

In Manila, the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation said it regrets that neither Chen nor his wife could come to receive the prize.

"The foundation is a nonpolitical organization, and we respect every country's authority and its decisions with regard to the travel of its citizens," it said, adding:

"It is the foundation's practice to officially inform the awardees' respective ambassadors to the Philippines about their having been selected as Magsaysay Awardees. The foundation also requests these ambassadors to assist in facilitating the travel arrangements for the awardees to come for the awarding ceremonies."

Chinese gov't biggest loser

Barring Yuan from leaving the country shows the extent to which China's authoritarian communist rulers will go to prevent government critics from drawing attention at international fora to human rights abuses within the country, the Associated Press noted.

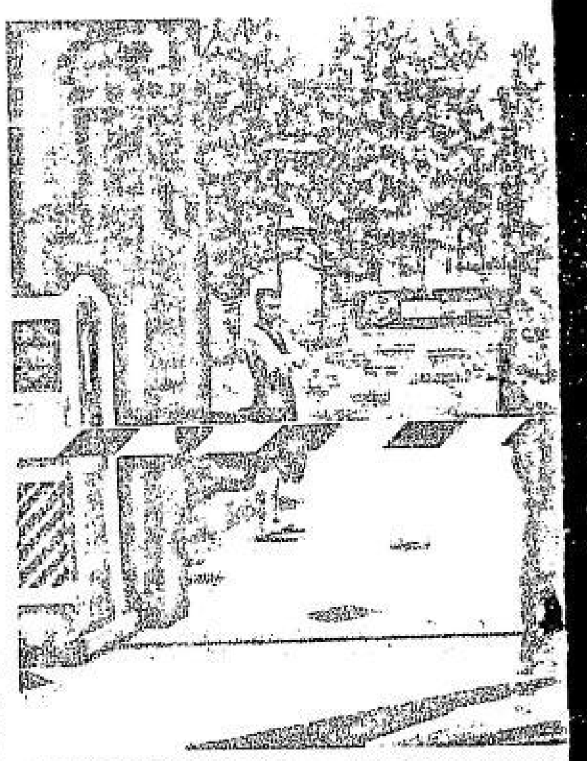
"The biggest loser here is not Yuan Weijing and not the Magsaysay Foundation but the Chinese government," Hu told AP. "This just really shows how bad the human rights situation is here."

In an interview a day before she was stopped at the airport, Yuan said, "I haven't done anything wrong, so I'll give it a try, and if they stop me then it's not my problem."

Chen, 35, was sentenced to four years and three months in prison in 2006 after he documented cases of forced abortions and other abuses by family planning officials in his native Shandong province in eastern China.

2 previous awardees blocked

China had blocked two previous winners of the Magsaysay prizes from collecting their awards.



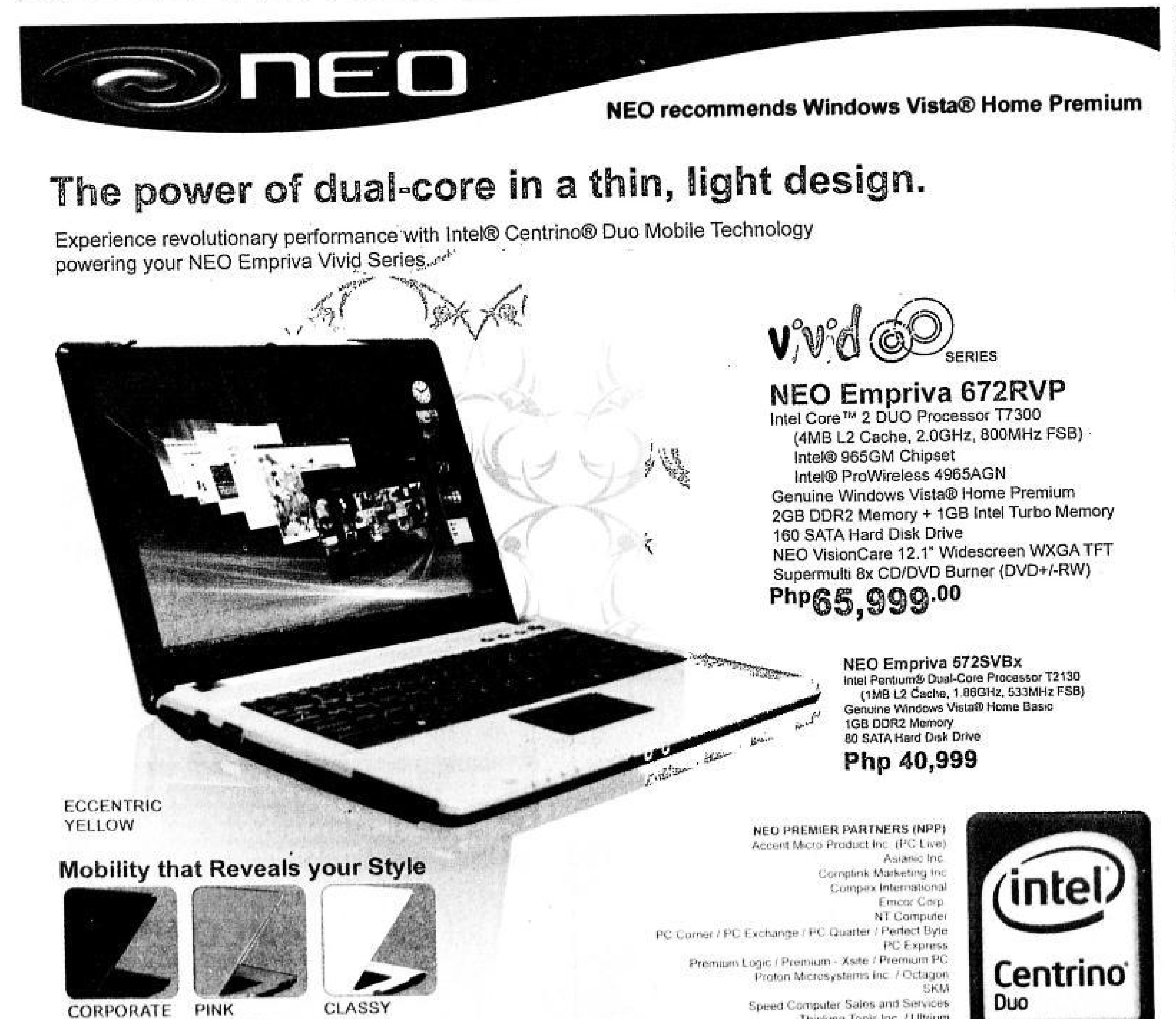
TIGHT GUARDING: Chinese plainclothes policem
apartment where the wife of the Magsaysay Awar
to Manila to get the award on behalf of her husban

An earlier travel ban was imposed on army doctor Jiang Yanyong, who embarrassed the government by revealing the true scale of the 2003 SARS outbreak.

Also blocked was crusading AIDS activist Gao Yaojie, who has been repeatedly harassed by provincial officials seeking to squelch news about the epidemic and government malfeasance that aided the disease's spread.

30 cops

Yuan said authorities in Shandong had attempted to prevent her from coming to Beijing and were blocking her from leaving Hu Jia's apartment where she had been staying. About 30 policemen blocked her on Friday, but she was eventually able to leave after about 45 minutes.



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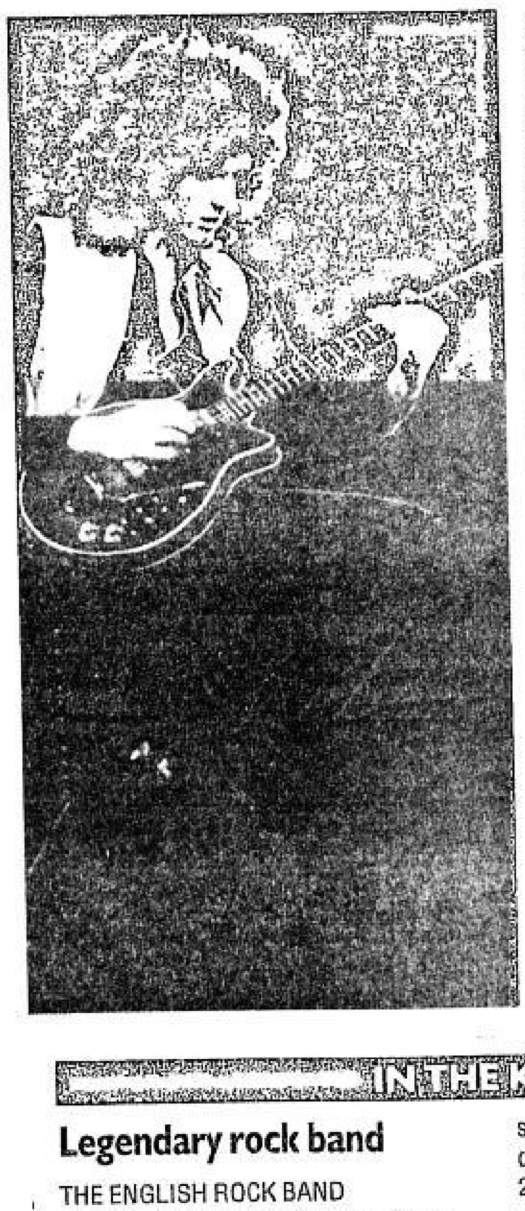

THE QUEEN, the English rock
and also into Rock and Roll Ha
Its single "Bohemian Rhapsod
time. Guitarist Brian May is at

Queen rock

From page A1

"Radial Velocities in the Zodi
Cloud"—at Imperial Colleg
in 1974, but abandoned
Queen's prospects began to b

He finally dusted off his
year and handed in his 48,
doctoral thesis about three w
to Imperial's head of ast
Professor Paul Nandra.

"I'm feeling rather joyful.

IN THE KNOW

Legendary rock band

THE ENGLISH ROCK BAND Queen—comprised of the late singer Freddie Mercury, guitarist Brian May, drummer Roger Taylor and bassist John Deacon—was formed in 1970. Three years later, the band released its first album, "Queen," under the EMI Group.

Queen's single "Bohemian Rhapsody," released in 1975, is considered one of the greatest songs of all time. Despite being nearly six minutes long, the song enjoyed successful radio play and stayed at the top spot of the Unite
dom music chart for nine weeks.
2004, "Bohemian Rhapsody" was
ducted into the Grammy Hall of Fa

Other hits include "We will Roc
and "We are the Champions."

Queen continued to receive hon
even after front man Mercury's dea
1991 due to complications brough
by AIDS. In 2002, the band receive
own star on the Hollywood Walk o
Queen was also inducted into the R
and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004.
Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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anes, Swiss, Austrians happiest; Pinoys in middle range

page A1

ties like Oxford and Cambridge to lish methods of judging individual national well-being. Governments putting ever greater emphasis on noting mental well-being—not just ing mental illness.

n much the same way that research nsumer unions helps you to make est buy, happiness research can help make the best choices," said Ruut hoven, who created the World base of Happiness in 1999.

l-good factors

hen he started studying happiness e 1960s, Veenhoven used data from l researchers who simply asked peo- ow satisfied they were with their on a scale of zero to 10. But as the pline has matured and gained popu- v in the past decade, self-reporting een found lacking.

w studies add more objective questions into a mix of feel-good factors—education, nutrition, freedom from fear and violence, gender equality, and perhaps most importantly, having choices.

"People's ability to be an agent, to act on behalf of what matters to them, is fundamental," said Sabina Alkire of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Institute, which began work on May 30.

But if people say money can't buy happiness, they're only partially right.

Happy countries

Veenhoven's database, which lists 95 countries, is headed by Denmark with a rating of 8.2, followed by Switzerland (8.1), Austria (8.0), Iceland (7.8) and Finland (7.7), all countries with high per capita income.

At the other end of the scale are much poorer countries: Tanzania rated 3.2, behind Zimbabwe (3.3), Moldova (3.5), Ukraine (3.6) and Armenia (3.7).

In the middle range are the Philippines with a rating of 6.4, followed by India (6.2), Iran (6.0), Poland (5.9) and South Korea (5.8).

The United States just makes it into the top 15 with a 7.4 index rating. While choice is abundant in America, nutrition and violence issues helped drag its rating down.

Wealth counts, but most studies of individuals show income disparities count more. Surprisingly, however, citizens are no happier in welfare states, which strive to mitigate the distortions of capitalism than in purer free-market economies.

Personal freedom

"In the beginning, I didn't believe my eyes," said Veenhoven of his data. "Icelanders are just as happy as Swedes, yet their country spends half what Sweden does (per capita) on social welfare," he said.

In emphasizing personal freedom as a root of happiness, Alkire cited her study of women in the southern Indian state of Kerala, which showed that poor women who make their own choices score highly, compared with women with strict fathers or husbands.

Adrian G. White, of the University of Leicester, included twice as many countries as Veenhoven in his Global Projection of Subjective Well-being, which also measures the correlation of happiness and wealth. He, too, led his list with Denmark, Switzerland and Austria.

Bhutan, where less than half the people can read or write and 90 percent are subsistence farmers, ranks No. 8 in his list of happy nations. Its notion of GNH is based on equitable development, environmental conservation, cultural heritage and good governance.

US researchers have found other underlying factors—married people are more content than singles, but having children does not raise happiness levels; education and IQ seem to have little impact; attractive people are only slightly happier than the unattractive; the elderly "over 65" are more satisfied with their lives than the young; friendships are crucial.

But the research also shows that many people are simply disposed to being either happy or disgruntled, and as much as 50 percent of the happiness factor is genetic.

U Penn paper

In an influential 2004 academic paper, Martin Seligman, the University of Pennsylvania psychologist credited with launching the positive psychology movement in 1998, and Ed Diener of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, encouraged policymakers to consider more than economic development in their planning.

"Although economic output has risen steeply over the past decades, there has been no rise in life satisfaction during this period, and there has been a substantial increase in depression and distrust," they wrote. *AP and Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

m coming to RP

n, at least 30 of them, block the gate of the ee for Emergent Leadership to prevent her flying

AFP

Yuan called Hu to let him know her passport had been confiscated but the call was quickly cut off. Attempts to reach her again failed. It was not immediately clear whether she had been detained.

Luggage off-loaded

Hu said Philippine Airlines service personnel told his wife that Yuan's baggage had been taken off the plane by police—a likely sign that she would be forcibly returned to Shandong.

Hu said Yuan told him authorities cited a statute blocking people who may cause harm to the nation from leaving the country when they took away her passport. *Reports from AP and AFP*

band, was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame of Fame and is on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. is considered one of the greatest songs of all

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tell you how much of a weight off the mind it is," May said after his assessors approved of his thesis and he passed an oral exam.

Dr. Brian May

"What matters is that this stands up in the future and that there are no holes in it."

He plans to celebrate his new title—he will now become Dr. Brian May—by having a private meal with friends and family but will not be presented with his qualification until a ceremony at London's Royal Albert Hall next May.

Science book

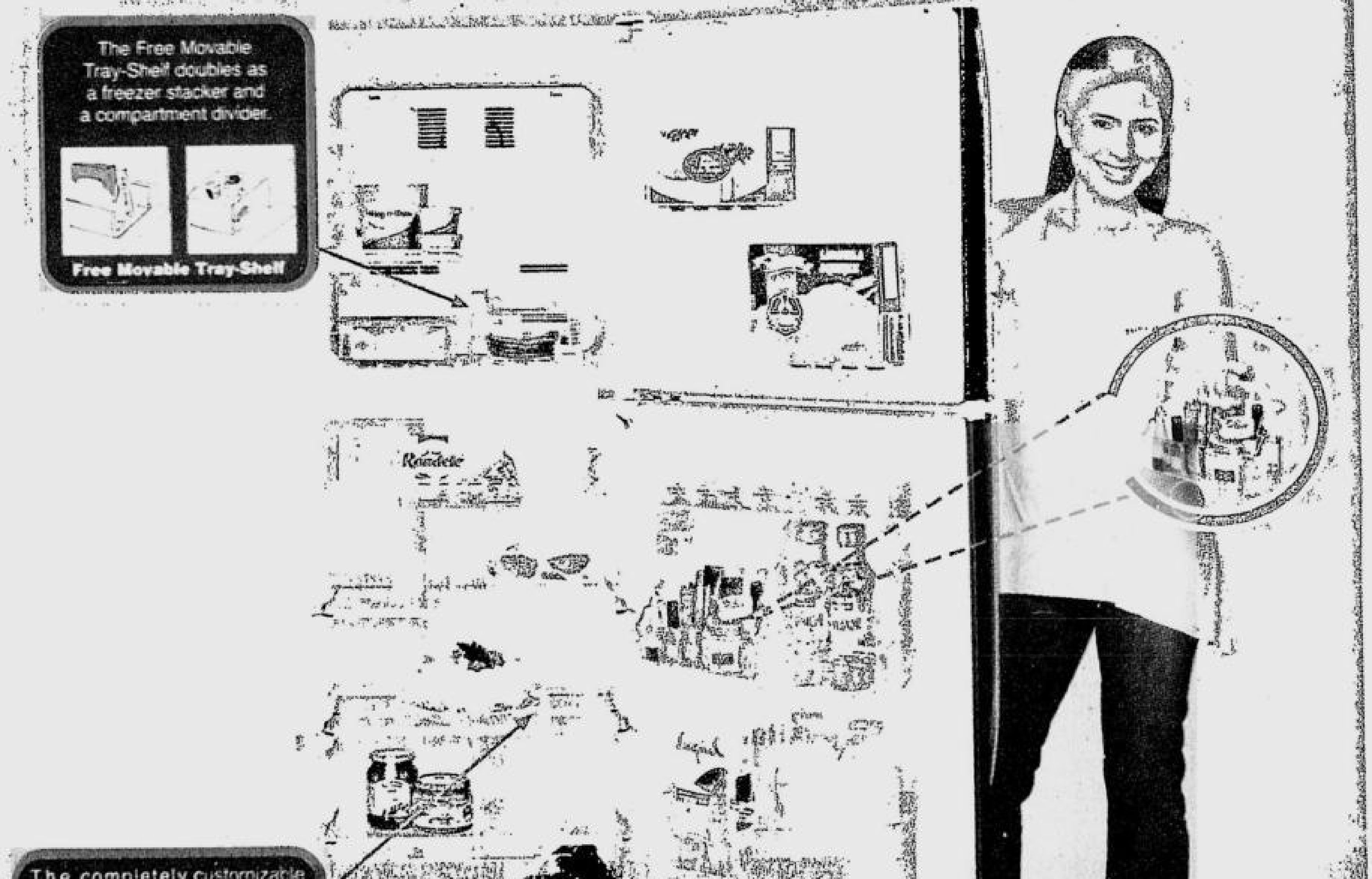
The guitarist, who famously played the national anthem on the top of Buckingham Palace at a party for Queen Elizabeth II's golden jubilee celebrations, has not completely neglected astronomy during his musical career.

He recently co-wrote a children's science book with astronomer Sir Patrick Moore, and last month received an honorary doctorate at Exeter University in southwest England. *AFP*

SHARP

The Sharp Space Saver refrigerator

Keep your cosmetics tidy with the practical carry anywhere cosmetic box!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The Sharp Space Saver refrigerator is truly an innovation in organized space. It's the only one that has the practical carry anywhere cosmetic box which detaches with ease from the ref body, giving you easy access to your make-up!

Plus, its no frost feature chills your cosmetics effectively, making it cool and pleasant upon application.

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SJ-42N
Liter (total) 318
cu. ft. 11.23

Other models available:

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SJ-34N
Liter (total) 256
cu. ft. 9.04

SJ-30N
Liter (total) 227
cu. ft. 8.02

SJ-26N
Liter (total) 205
cu. ft. 7.24

SJ-22N
Liter (total) 177
cu. ft. 6.25

SJ-F75PS
Liter (total) 605
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Purge or whitewash?

EDITORIAL

CORRUPT OFFICIALS CROWD THE CORRIDORS of power, but Malacañang is reluctant to send them to jail or even to just let them go. The Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) found sufficient evidence of graft and corruption against 92 presidential appointees over the last few years, but the really big cases seem to be gathering dust in the Office of the President.

The PAGC serves as the investigation arm of Malacañang in graft cases involving presidential appointees, but it is the OP that decides whether to suspend or dismiss erring officials and endorse the filing of charges against them to the Office of the Ombudsman.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the OP has already disposed of all but 35 of those cases, with four of the remaining cases involving members of the Cabinet, and it has until the middle of September to act on them. The two most recent OP decisions saw the dismissal of the chair of the National Labor Relations Commission for allegedly extorting P200,000 from the owner of a recruitment agency and the firing of the head of the Intramuros Administration for allegedly failing to liquidate P2.2 million in cash advances to cover the expenses for the eviction of squatters and cutting by half his agency's share of parking fees estimated to reach almost P6 million annually.

Curiously for an administration that is not exactly publicity shy, few people, if any, seem to have heard about the dozens of graft cases that Malacañang has reviewed and acted upon, except for these two cases. And even then, these are far from earthshaking in an era of multimillion-peso scandals, when even minor functionaries at the Bureau of Customs or the Bureau of Internal Revenue have been found to own houses in posh villages and fleets of expensive cars and to travel abroad as often as senators and congressmen. It's either that the OP has been conducting a quiet purge of penny-ante grafters or it has been operating a giant whitewashing machine that puts all the PAGC's efforts to waste.

Suspecting that the OP is stonewalling the really big cases, several lawyers in the PAGC are said to be thinking of resigning. What is especially frustrating for them is the OP's inaction on cases involving heads of government corporations, who are said to be close to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

But maybe these lawyers are getting carried away by their idealism. The cynics would be quick to point out that to this day no case has been filed against another close friend of Mr. Arroyo, former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante, who could not account for some P728 million in fertilizer funds. The Senate has investigated the case and the Commission on Audit has concluded that the money was indeed misused. However, despite all the documentary evidence provided by the Senate, the Office of the Ombudsman still has not brought formal charges against Bolante, who has skipped to the United States in the meantime. So what makes the PAGC lawyers think that the cases they have built against officials with powerful connections would fare any better and get anywhere?

The PAGC was reportedly endowed with a P1-billion grant from the United States and allocated the same amount by the Philippine government. If the most that it is permitted to do is pin down officials who extort P200,000 or fail to account for a couple of millions in government funds, it might as well be dismantled. There's no sense in throwing away billions to catch officials who steal a couple of million pesos. The PAGC should not be used as a show window for a cleanup that is really intended to sweep the dirtiest scams under the rug.

Pain prolonged

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE DELAYS IN CONDUCTING INQUESTS INTO SOLDIERS killed in action [in Iraq and Afghanistan] are unforgivable. Grieving families are routinely waiting a year, two years, or even longer for inquests to be held.

Ministers have been aware of the problem since the spring of 2005. Promises have been made to sanction extra resources to end this shameful backlog, to limited effect. ...

These delays serve only to protract the pain of bereavement. The families of those who make the ultimate sacrifice for their country deserve better.

The War Widows Association says the problem could be resolved if a specialist center was set up with experienced coroners.

That will require (relatively modest) resources and some political will. Is that too much to ask?

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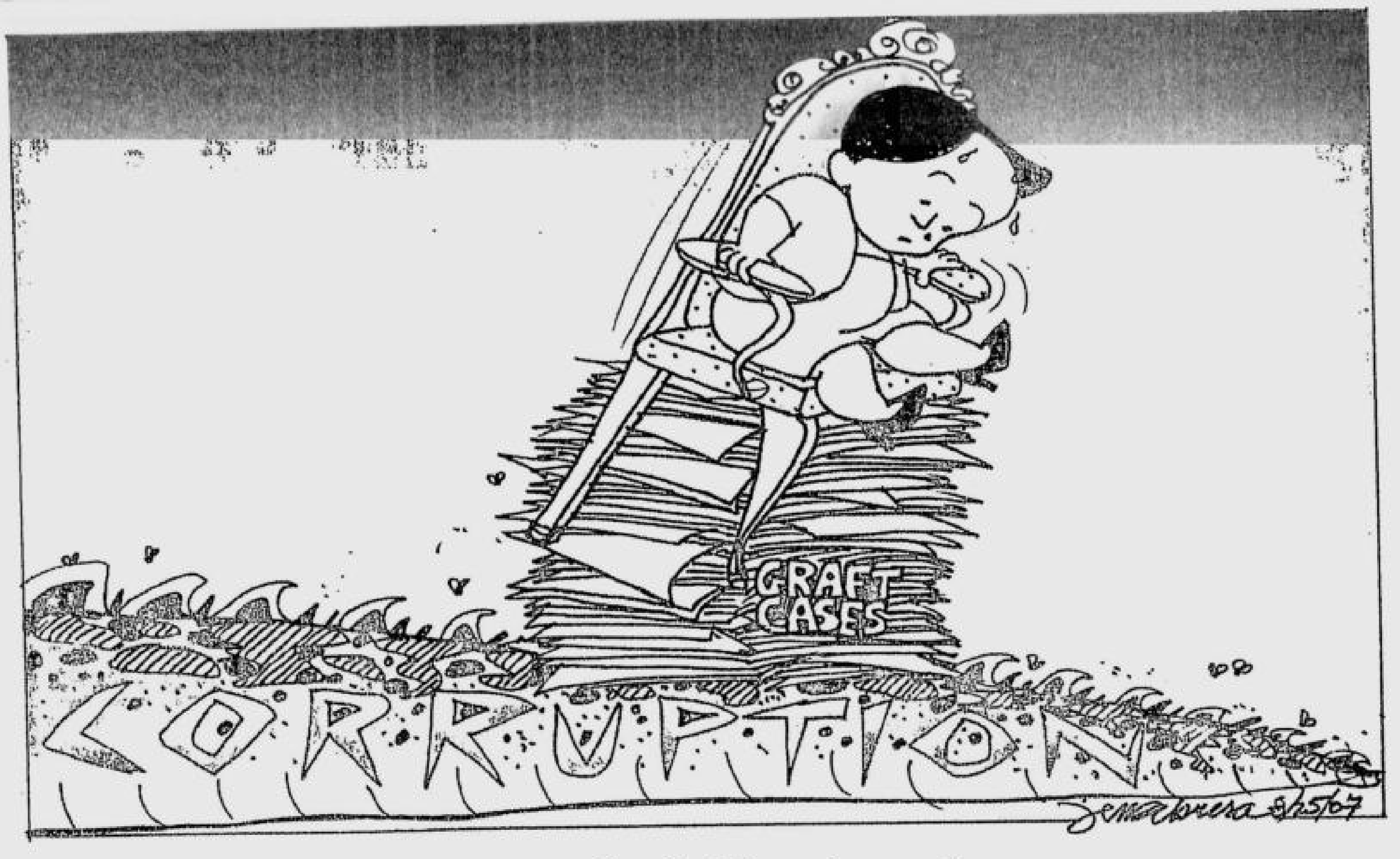


Hello Garci and Philippine democracy

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE HELLO GARCI CONTROVERSY POSED two important questions that, to this day, remain unanswered. First, did the military undertake operations, including wiretapping, for partisan political purposes during the 2004 presidential election? Second, did President Macapagal-Arroyo conspire with election officials to manipulate the results of the 2004 presidential election?

The taped conversations at the center of this controversy furnish enough clues that an independent investigative body might pursue to arrive at a complete picture of what happened. In fact, a number of inquisitive journalists had worked with these leads and found them useful. Their reports were consistently damning accounts of the collusion between the military, the electoral body, and the presidency itself. Yet these were dismissed as merely speculative and without evidentiary value.

In any other functioning democracy, such issues would instantly become the relentless object of investigation by the designated agencies of government. If these agencies were deemed inadequate to the enormity and sensitivity of the task at hand, an independent commission would in most cases be established. A good example is the 9/11 Commission which was given a sweeping mandate to investigate the events surrounding the terrorist attacks on the United States. In the course of its work, this special body inquired into a range of issues "including those relating to intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies, diplomacy, immigration issues and border control, the flow of assets to terrorist organizations, commercial aviation, the role of congressional oversight and resource allocation, and other areas determined relevant by the Commission."

One could appreciate the amazing scope of this mandate. For, at stake was no less than the viability of the entire American institutional system of governance.

Consider, in contrast, our system's feeble response to the crisis spawned by the Hello Garci tapes. The Armed Forces conducted its investigation of the involvement of its own personnel in the alleged wiretapping and the doctoring of electoral outcomes in Mindanao. To no one's surprise, they found the allegations baseless. The Commission on Elections launched its own investigation of the involvement of Comelec officials in election irregularities in Mindanao, and promptly reported—again, to no one's surprise—that the suspicions were baseless. None of these supposed reports has been made public.

Both the generals and the Comelec officials have dared their accusers to bring them to court. They know, and everyone knows, that you need solid evidence for this—the kind of evidence that precisely only an authorized and empowered investigative body can put together. But whom should we turn to for this? The National Bureau of Investigation under the Department of Justice headed by Secretary Raul Gonzalez? The Philippine National Police under the Department of Interior and Local Government headed by Secretary Ronaldo Puno?

No one trusts the independence of these government agencies, particularly when it involves Ms Arroyo. Together, Secretary Gonzalez and Secretary Puno have done more than any of their predecessors to undermine the autonomy and efficiency of the investigative and prosecutorial offices under them. This is the crux of our present institutional crisis. The imperatives of regime survival have assumed a higher priority over the integrity of our institutional system. The outcome of this has been the corruption of institutions. In turn, the weakening of our legal and administrative institutions has encouraged the politicization of almost all issues. This is what eventually turns the public against politics itself, paving the way for a government devoid of politics—a dictatorship.

This is the challenge now facing the Senate as a result of Sen. Panfilo Lacson's revival of the Hello Garci issues. These issues demand a satisfactory closure, for they touch on the very legitimacy—the right to rule—of those who make decisions in our name. Ideally, that closure must come from the legal system, but that is not forthcoming. And so it has fallen on Congress to put these questions to rest. Yet Congress can only do so with one hand tied behind its back. Two years ago, the House conducted its own investigation, and ran into all kinds of legal questions. Nothing much was established. Now it is the Senate's turn. Like the House, it is not properly equipped to conduct the investigation of probable crimes.

I doubt if anything conclusive will result from the Senate's re-opening of the Hello Garci controversy—something that can constitute a firm basis to impeach anyone or to send anyone to jail. But it doesn't mean the investigation will be useless. At the very least, the manner in which our politicians will conduct themselves in the process could decisively shape the political terrain for the 2010 presidential election. On the other hand, a can of worms might suddenly open, setting the stage for another dramatic turn of events.

We continue to live in extremely volatile times. We remain trapped in the shameful inequalities of an obsolete social order. Our people's expectations of government have shifted significantly in the last three decades, rendering the ways of traditional politics increasingly irrelevant. They are looking for new leaders, but right now they are having a hard time telling the new ones from the old ones.

* * *

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Nothing wrong with GSIS eCard except that...

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH THE GSIS eCard concept. After all, a card that can be used for all transactions with the agency—as an ID, as an ATM card and even for making purchases—can't possibly be bad. It can be a great convenience, for both the card-carrying member and the Government Service Insurance System itself, generating savings not only in time but in money as well.

Of course, whether it will actually live up to its potential is another matter. Alas, if the GSIS' computerization project—which has been in place for over four years now—is any indication, the likelihood of that happening any time soon is infinitesimal. Moreover, that the GSIS felt the need to offer a P5,000 automatic loan (which they call a cash bonus) as a sweetener so that its members would apply for an eCard tends to indicate that there is not much enthusiasm on the demand side. Except that it is not at all clear at this point whether the members have a choice in the matter in the first place.

But based on the hype, one would think that the eCard is God's gift to the government employee: it enables members to apply for all loans, except housing, over the Internet; it allows a member to withdraw up to P100,000 a day versus the usual P20,000 allowed by an ordinary ATM; it can also store P1 to P2 million, so that retirees won't have to fall in line anymore to get their claims.

That an overwhelming majority of the members may not have access to the Internet in the first place; or that the number of members who have the resources that will make withdrawing P100,000 a day a commonplace transaction is extremely small—these are picayune details not worthy of anyone's attention. All these, aside from obvious bugs in the system itself, belie the claims of efficiency and convenience. (Thursday's INQUIRER carried a letter from the son of a government retiree who is in the ICU of a hospital and has not received his pension checks for the past four months. This, in addition to the letters bitterly complaining along the same vein discussed by Ramon Farolan in his column in this newspaper.)

And while we're at it, this may be an excellent time to get feedback from government employees about their experience with the (pre-eCard) computerization program of the GSIS. Four years ago, when this program was the target of numerous and well-based complaints, GSIS vice president Mernilo Racimo told me that once the program was up and running—which he estimated to be by the end of the year 2003 "at the latest," government employees could get their salary and policy loans, as well as retirement claims, processed within the hour. What is more, he said, government employees would no longer have to go through the hassle of presenting certifications of payment or going to Manila to follow up their claims.

Government employees who have borrowed are welcome to text or e-mail me their experience at 09178448550 or at solita_monsod@yahoo.com.

Using 20-20 hindsight, the question arises: what was the need of an eCard if GSIS members were already enjoying such conveniences since the end of 2003?

To repeat, nothing is wrong with an eCard. What has been severely criticized is the manner in which the "bidding" for the project was conducted, and the subsequent award of the contract to Union Bank, which from the point of view of branch network and number of proprietary ATMs (the less the number, the more the members have to pay in extra charges when withdrawing or depositing), should have been totally out of the running from the word go.

What was objected to was how, in the process, the GSIS ran roughshod over the Land Bank of the Philippines, its main depository bank since the '90s. To the injury it inflicted on the latter by withdrawing its deposits and transferring it to Union Bank (which is the main effect of winning the eCard project), the GSIS added the insult of claiming that Land Bank did not bid on the project and was not interested in it. Does anyone really think that Land Bank, faced with the possible loss of deposits of anywhere from P6 billion to P12 billion (Union Bank admits to now holding government deposits of P17 billion, most of which is GSIS'), wouldn't be scrambling to keep them? The GSIS proof: a telephone conversation with the Land Bank branch manager at the GSIS, who supposedly informed them of the Land Bank's decision. Can you imagine a Land Bank so cavalier as to relegate to a branch manager the task of communicating such a momentous decision— and orally at that?

The most objectionable of all—and indicative of what can only be called bad faith on the part of the GSIS—is how it tried to block at every turn the special audit of this and other transactions ordered by the Commission on Audit in response to direct complaints as well as newspaper reports. Then the GSIS refused to provide the COA's Special Audit Team (SAT) the documents that had been requested for the audit, defying even a subpoena. Then the GSIS questioned the legality of the COA's forming an SAT. It gave the SAT zilch. Does that sound like an agency with nothing to hide?

When the SAT was forced to secure the information from other sources—the resident COA auditor, Congress, Land Bank, Development Bank of the Philippines, Bank of the Philippine Islands—the GSIS lawyers figuratively threw the book at them. Winston Garcia himself, GSIS' president and general manager, filed a suit for damages, in Cebu, against everyone in the COA who had anything to do with the SAT—for being humiliated.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Not to worry—we will melt it.

Popular flavors for democracy

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

DEMOCRACY, LIKE OTHER DESIRABLE DISHES, comes not in one flavor but in a blend of flavors. Inasmuch as people have different tastes, different groups of people prefer different blends.

Notwithstanding the actual blend of our democracy today, it can be said that, for us Filipinos, the ideal-tasting democracy is flavored with four parts **Fulfilled Basic Needs**, three parts **Elections**, two parts **Freedom to Criticize**, and one part **Economic Equality**.

This is based on the pattern of answers to the survey question: "People often differ in their view on the characteristic that is essential to democracy. If you had to choose only one of the things that I am going to read, which one would you choose as the most essential in a democracy? (a) Opportunity to change the government through elections. (b) Freedom to criticize those in power. (c) A small income gap between rich and poor. (d) Basic necessities like food, clothes and shelter etc. for everyone."

Although the question is rather simple—it allows a choice of only one "flavor" even though all four "flavors" are, to some extent, desirable—the distribution of survey responses in an area can still be thought of as the mix of flavors for democracy most preferred by the people there. Note that the first two "flavors" refer to **democracy as a process**, whereas the last two refer to ideal social **outcomes of democracy**.

This item is from the Asian Barometer Survey (ABS), the region's first network of democracy studies based on national surveys. SWS represents the Philippines in the ABS. The first ABS was done in 2001-2003 in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mongolia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. The second ABS, in 2005-2007, has added Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. The second Philippine round was done from Nov. 25, 2005 to Dec. 5, 2005.

No. 1: Fulfilled basic needs. Thirty-eight percent of Filipinos say that the most important component of democracy is the provision of basic necessities for everyone. Among the nine countries with already available data, we Filipinos rank second only to the Taiwanese (45 percent) in singling out fulfillment of basic needs as the prime expectation from democracy.

Far below the Taiwanese and Filipinos in putting primacy on the fulfillment of basic needs are the Indonesians (29 percent), Singaporeans (28 percent), Japanese (27 percent), Mongolians (26 percent), Vietnamese (20 percent), Thais (12 percent), and Koreans (10 percent).

No. 2: Elections. The second most-desired characteristic of democracy in our country is the opportunity to elect new leaders periodically—31 percent of Filipinos choose this answer.

In the ABS, the people who seem most focused on elections as part of democracy are the Thais (38 percent; their survey was in 2006 prior to the military coup), followed by the Vietnamese (37 percent), Koreans and Japanese (both 35 percent). The Filipinos rank fifth, followed by Singaporeans (28 percent), Taiwanese and Indonesians (both 27 percent), and lastly Mongolians (20 percent).

No. 3: Freedom to criticize. Only 19 percent of Filipinos think that having the freedom to criticize those in power is what is most essential in a democracy. On this score, we rank fourth in the group of nine.

The people most insistent on freedom to criticize are the Mongolians (31 percent), followed by Indonesians (22 percent) and Singaporeans (20 percent). After the Filipinos come the Koreans (14 percent), Thais (13 percent), Japanese (12 percent), Vietnamese (6 percent), and Taiwanese (4 percent)

No. 4: Economic equality. On the other hand, among East Asians, we Filipinos are by far the least concerned that democracy be characterized by a small gap between the rich and the poor—only 7 percent chose this answer. In other words, we Filipinos desire more for democracy to fulfill the basic needs of the poor than for it to ensure equality between the poor and the rich.

Much more concerned than Filipinos about economic equality are the Koreans (36 percent), Vietnamese (25 percent), Mongolians (20 percent), Taiwanese and Singaporeans (both 18 percent), Japanese (17 percent) and Thais (14 percent). Only among the Indonesians (11 percent) is the proportion less than double than that of Filipinos.

When one distinguishes the four "flavors" sought in a democracy, Asian peoples appear different—Filipinos and Koreans are poles apart in their concern for equity relative to poverty. But when the "flavors" are grouped into two, Filipinos and Koreans look similar. Thus, 50 percent of both Filipinos and Koreans go for democracy-as-process; while 45 percent of Filipinos and 46 percent of Koreans go for democracy-as-outcome.

So might two persons both say they like sweet-and-sour soup, yet like one recipe for the sweet component and another for the sour?

* * *

Notes: The figures cited here are the second-round data released at the ABS international conference on "Why Asians Support Democracy and Why Not?" The conference was held at Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan on Aug. 9-10, 2007.

The national sample sizes ranged from 1,012 in Singapore to 1,598 in Indonesia, for sampling error margins of about 3 percent, plus or minus, in all cases—the size of sample is what matters, not the size of the population from which the sample comes. Website: www.asianbarometer.org.

* * *

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.

The best way to like a book

COMMENTARY

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz

THE LIBRARY HUB IN MASBATE CITY IN THE DepEd city division compound stood proud and ready for last week's inauguration, looking like the newest kid on the block. No one could quite believe that the idle and neglected storehouse that it was in its previous life could be resurrected into a library. Why, no one even wanted to be within spitting distance of it then. But not so now, not with its lure of a starter collection of 30,000 books for public school children. Yes, only brand-new storybooks to read and to savor and to imagine with—no textbooks on newsprint, thank you.

An audience of 200 teachers, representing all the schools in the city of Masbate, gathered for a two-day training workshop in the same week—a mandatory prerequisite for the privilege of having a Library Hub. The training of teacher-librarians includes a full day of storytelling techniques and another day of understanding the reading process, 50-plus ways to hook the kids to books, and learning how to use the books in the classroom.

More often than not, midway through all the theories and pedagogical approaches and the jargon of the trade, both audience and teacher-trainer (in this case, me) take a pause and gloss over the rest of the presentation. At this point, the audience begins to realize that all those notes could be thrown out of the window, with the sudden discovery that the best way to know and to like a book is simply by reading it, by immersing in it.

And then, the teachers' own tried-and-tested ideas surfaced, especially when one of them wondered how she could ever begin to teach her students from the "lowest section" to learn to read. It was the consensus that the politically incorrect term be dropped for fear of the "self-fulfilling prophecy" syndrome, and that it instead be replaced with the phrase "challenged section."

How to solicit parent involvement when parents themselves are not literate? It augurs well for the system that the first two volunteered strategies should come from very young teachers, one of them 22-year-old Adril Torres. Why not establish a Monday Special as a reading treat for the class? Or make a class book that the class composes together as it goes through a language experience exercise?

Merien Esber of the Jose Zerbito Elementary School led us in a catchy rap of the Dewey Decimal System and pleaded with everyone to please finally let go of reading techniques which don't work especially as they do remedial work with nonreaders. The Hub in Masbate completes the initial batch of 35 such Hubs targeted for opening last school year in school divisions nationwide. These Hubs are meant to benefit three million students in over 6,000 public elementary schools. That may not sound like an amazing feat, considering that 300 Library Hubs are targeted by 2010. However, the Hub concept sounds more feasible than the idea of building libraries for all 41,000 public schools in the country today.

The "slow" pace is welcome and deliberate. It convinces that the Hubs are not overnight structures for mere political color. The process is undeniably tedious, as it requires the collaboration of the Department of Education, the local government and the donors. The mere fact that the concept—a brainchild of a former undersecretary who fell from grace, now silently and valiantly carried out by his successor—is in itself a turn of events that is most unexpected, going against everything we have seen in the dismal past. This will not please him, but mention must be made of the DepEd's low-key undersecretary for finance and administration—Ted Sangil, a former technocrat from the banking sector; but even more impressive, an avid book lover himself, who deserves credit for keeping this great idea going.

Division superintendent Anita Bueno Castillo—through sheer persistence and patience—made the Library Hub happen. When one talks to Castillo, one does not wonder that she saw it to its finish. It was she who also began the novel idea of including private school teachers in all the professional development training that the public school teachers go through. A wonderful reversal of roles? The public school teachers in attendance exuded unusual self-confidence and facility in English and this she explains with a touch of humor: "I tell them that even if they come from a barangay, they should still be proud and act like a teacher from the city of Masbate!"

The Library Hub in the "city of Masbate" has again rendered irrelevant the oft-repeated litany of excuses lamenting the absence of books. The idea of a warehouse type of library is incredulous. But before the Hub turns busy fulfilling its promise, it must first be given another coat of paint—for it has to conform to the mandated sunshiny yellow that all Hubs wear, so that it stands out in unmistakable welcome and blends better with the striking signature Library Hub logo designed by McCann-Erickson.

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz is a writer and editor, a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People and a trustee of the Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation. Email comments to nenisrc@gmail.com

Millionaire wives in the military; the mole in Smart

BETWEEN DEADLINES

THE NEW MEANING OF STAR CRUISES. Gossipy wives of colonels and generals are talking about how their "club president" has often been absent from their meetings. The reason: this general's wife travels abroad frequently. A club member said the "club president" often travels with the wife of another general (one with more stars on his shoulders than her own husband).

The buzz is that a growing number of millionaire colonels and their wives have been bitten by the travel bug. Conversations during class socials, according to a military wife, often revolve around travels and which colleges abroad their children are enrolled in. The INQUIRER checked one blog that shows off this kind of "unexplained wealth," and sure enough the "evidence" is there for anyone to see. *F. Zamora*

* * *

JOEY'S WALKOUT. Albay Gov. Joey Salceda walked out of the Bicol Regional Development Council meeting last week after the body decided to put to a vote the designation of the two government-sector and two private-sector nominees for council chair. President Macapagal-Arroyo will appoint the BRDC co-chairs from the list of nominees.

Salceda left the room but later returned; in the end, he got six votes, against the 38 votes of Camarines Sur Gov. Lray Villafuerte, the incumbent RDC chair. (Villafuerte, nominated by Gov. Olga Kho of Masbate and seconded by Gov. Jesus Typoco of Camarines Norte, also got the vote of Gov. Sally Lee of Sorsogon.)

Since only Villafuerte and Salceda were nominated to represent the government, however, the President can still choose Salceda, her close economic adviser. *J. Escandor Jr.*

* * *

THE MOLE IN SMART. Sitting down with a group of reporters on Wednesday, former military intelligence agent Vidal Doble admitted that the Isafp's controversial MIG 21 unit bugged not only election expert Virgilio Garcillano but also personalities from both the administration and the opposition involved in the 2004 elections.

He claimed that the Isafp had a mole inside Smart Communications, the country's biggest cellular phone network, that made the bugging of Smart phones possible.

Asked what he remembered from the wiretapped conversations of personalities like Michael Defensor of the administration and Horacio Morales and Rez Cortez from the opposition, Doble said he couldn't remember.

After a real effort to recall the details, however, Doble said he did remember one conversation. He said Defensor was heard discussing with a member of his staff the citizenship issue of foreign basketball stars playing in the Philippine Basketball Association. Doble mentioned the name of Asi Taulava in particular.

Since Talauva plays for Talk n' Text, a subsidiary of Smart, one reporter quickly responded: "Isn't this a shakedown against Smart?" *N. Bordadora*

* * *

GIMME A BREAK! The string of briefings and meetings with energy sector stakeholders, both public and private, seems to be paying off for Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes, who marks his 25th day in office today.

Some energy officials have actually professed their liking for the new energy czar, particularly commending his persistence in learning anything and everything about an industry that usually takes one many years to master.

Not that he's already mastered the industry. In a recent Manila Hotel "kapihan," he had in tow two Department of Energy directors to help him answer questions that he expected members of the media to throw his way.

Questions from the floor were a cinch for him, but with the energy beat reporters it was a different matter. On more than one occasion, he turned to one of the DOE directors for answers. His disclaimer: "I've been criticized and crucified since Day One. Please give me a break. It's just been two weeks." *A. Ho*

* * *

WAITING FOR NO ONE. It was a long wait for members of the media who turned up at Villamor Air Base on Monday afternoon to cover the arrival of the bodies of 14 military personnel (13 Marines, one Air Force pilot) from Zamboanga City.

Reporters, photographers and cameramen started arriving around 3 p.m., around the same time bereaved families of the slain soldiers and their comrades in the Armed Forces started gathering at the military terminal fronting the ramp, the site where the dead would be given military honors.

Some even came in the morning, heeding an earlier advisory that the casualties would be airlifted to Manila by 11 a.m. As the day wore on, the schedule was reset several times until the final definite arrival time was announced: 7 p.m.

By sundown, already well past print media deadlines and the start of the early evening broadcast news, some in the media box could not help but complain. Until one television reporter quickly put things in perspective: "*Buti nga tayo istorya lang ang iniintay. Eh 'yung mga pamilya sa loob, ano bang iniintay nila?*" *T. Quismundo*

* * *

BLAST FROM THE PAST. From the Aug. 12, 1989 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer:

Washington moving out of Clark?

"Bluff," say most of the boys in the Senate.

Erap, or Joseph Estrada, for one, says the Americans are clearly pulling our leg again. It would take the Americans some $15 billion to move their things out of the vast Pampanga airfield, and another big sum to install it elsewhere, he says.

Americans, he says, are floating the story, to see how Filipinos would react.

"*Ang mahirap sa atin, matagal na tayong pinaiikot ng mga Amerikanong yan, pumapayag namang magpa-ikot ang mga lider natin,*" says Erap.

"*Sabagay lahat naman ng mga presidente natin gawa ng Amerikano,*" he injects, using the straight talk and street logic that people have come to expect from him.

Markers and realities

YOUNG BLOOD

Martin Villanueva

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

A CHILD DEFECATES AT THE FOOT OF THE PINAGLABANAN Shrine. Boys barely in their teens pass around a plastic bag with solvent, which they inhale by the monument of Simon de Anda. A yellow balloon shaped like a star with a smiley face floats next to the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).

I see something intriguing in the ironies—somewhat poetic even, in a depressing kind of way.

The first scene is from a history professor's eyewitness account. The second I saw firsthand a couple of months ago. My interpretation of the third led an Australian to accuse me of being too "harsh" on my own country.

Pinaglabanan marks the spot where Filipinos first attacked the Spaniards. I visited the marker for an article I had to write. The only thing momentous was the irony, for nothing separates where a fight took place over a century ago and the one that continues today: the fight against poverty, as seen through the squatter community within the gated compound where the supposed monument stands.

Simon de Anda is remembered because without him, we might have become a British colony. Given a reality where many out-of-school children spend their off-hours from helping their families experimenting with various levels of escapism, including drugs, maybe being under the British would not have been such a bad thing, as a few of my colleagues joked when I told them about it. Maybe this is why we ignore his supposed significance and "honor" him with a rather bland and forgettable marker outside of Intramuros.

Much has been made of Star City's moniker being in such glaring proximity to a supposed bastion of our arts and culture. But given that its structure imitates something out of New York and considering (among many other oxymoronic things) the controversy over its being built during the Marcos era, wouldn't the Cultural Center of the Philippines' claim to cultural importance be incomplete without the balloon mocking it? After all, Star City has many more visitors than the CCP. Which place truly represents Filipino culture?

It is too easy to romanticize the need to salvage and maintain historical markers and cultural institutions. What does a marker, a monument, or a building mean anyway in the reality of our nation? In some ways, I sympathize with the child in Pinaglabanan who did not know better, as well as with his parents and his neighbors. What is a battle fought over a century ago to them, given the harsh realities they wake up to each and every day?

The subconscious (or perhaps conscious) "defiance" of the child, the "rugby boys" and even Star City serve as markers for the reality faced by the masses. If it is not ignorance about the past, it is the frustration over the present. We are reminded of freedom and the sacrifices made to attain it, but how free are a people who still live in poverty, sacrificing integrity? We are reminded of the richness of our culture, but what does it profit a people who are too immature, too ignorant, too impatient, or simply too hard-pressed to apply its appreciation to everyday living?

Monuments and markers are important; we should never forget the past. But in the here and now, in the urgency of today, I cannot blame Filipinos for not understanding this, for choosing to dwell upon tonight's dinner or choosing to forget their problems by getting high as opposed to remembering the first among Andres Bonifacio's men to be killed.

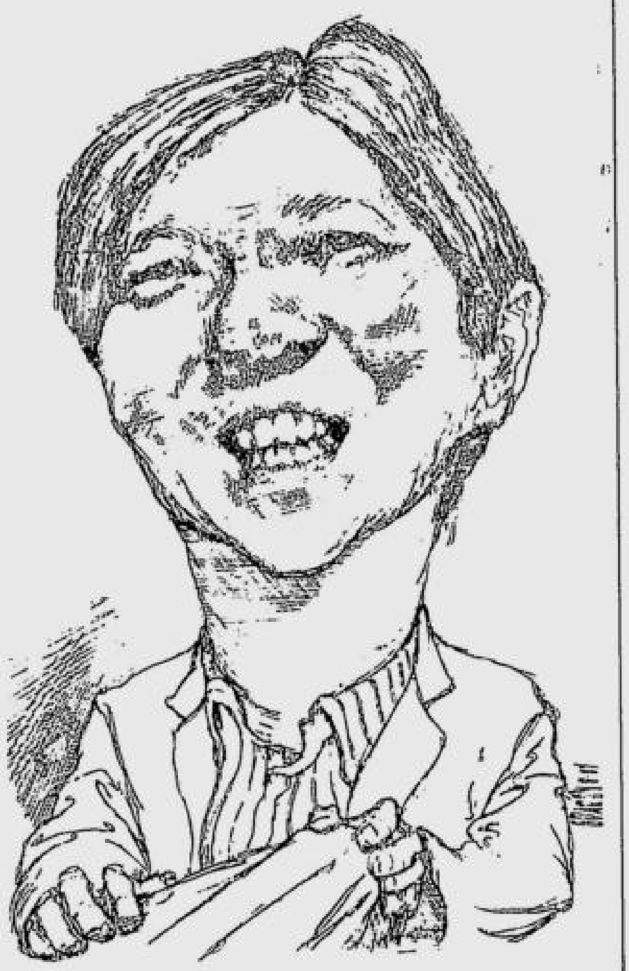
I would wholeheartedly support a lower budget for the maintenance of monuments if the amount saved is dumped into the budget for health care and education so that that child in Pinaglabanan would have a better place to stay with his family, and those "rugby boys" would be taken off the streets and sent into classrooms. But this is not where the money is going, is it? This is not the reality in our culture of indifference, as exemplified by our lack of political will.

I am all for monuments. But I am also not completely against the way the masses treat them, for it is truly a reflection of where we are as a people today. In the end, what is more momentous is not the heroics of heroes but the stupidity of those who came after them, leaders and their minions alike.

Grumbling about the sanctity of monuments being violated could use a little contextualization. The undesirable attitude of man toward markers may not be morally sound, but it is a more precise representation of who we are. It's a sad joke. What have we been snorting to be so disillusioned?

Martin Villanueva, 21, is a Creative Writing senior at the Ateneo de Manila University and associate editor of Katipunan, a magazine independently published by students.

IN THE NEWS



Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND PERIODS OF PROHIBITED ACTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONDUCT OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2007 PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE CONVERSION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NAGA, INTO A COMPONENT CITY, IN THE PROVINCE OF CEBU TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF NAGA PURSUANT TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9491.

x-------------------------x

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Jr. Florentino A.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 23 August 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 8279

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 51 of Republic Act No. 9491, the Commission on Elections shall conduct and supervise the plebiscite to ratify the conversion of the Municipality of Naga into a component city in the Province of Cebu to be known as the City of Naga.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act Nos. 7160, 7166, 9491 and other election laws, the Commission on Elections has **RESOLVED** to adopt, as it hereby **RESOLVES** to adopt, the following **CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND PERIODS OF PROHIBITED ACTS** for the September 2, 2007 plebiscite to ratify the conversion of the Municipality of Naga into a component city in the Province of Cebu to be known as the City of Naga, to wit:

DATE/PERIOD	PLEBISCITE ACTIVITIES	PROHIBITED ACTS/ PERIODS INVOLVED
August 15, 2007 (WED) to Sept. 6, 2007 (SAT)	**PLEBISCITE PERIOD**	1. Bearing, carrying or transporting firearms or other deadly weapons in public places, including any building, street, park, private vehicle or public conveyance, even if licensed to possess or carry the same, unless authorized in writing by the Commission. (Sec. 261 (p) (q) (s) OEC) as amended by Sec. 32 R.A. No. 7166; 2. Suspension of local elective officials. (Sec. 261 (x), OEC); 3. Transfer of officers and employees in the civil service. (Sec. 261 (h), OEC); 4. Organization or maintenance of reaction forces, strike forces or other similar forces. (Sec. 261 (u), OEC).
August 15, 2007 (WED) to Sept. 2, 2007 (SUN)		1. Appointment or hiring of new employees (Sec. 261 (g), OEC); 2. Creation or filling-up of new positions (Sec. 261 (g), OEC). 3. Promotions or giving of salary increases, remuneration or privilege (Sec. 261 (g), OEC); 4. Construction of public works, delivery of materials for public works and issuance of treasury warrants or similar devices for a future undertaking chargeable against public funds. (Sec. 261 (w), OEC); 5. Releases, disbursements of expenditures of public works and social services and development. (Sec. 261 (v), OEC); 6. Appointment or use of special policemen, special or confidential agents or the like. (Sec. 261 (m), OEC); 7. Use of armored land, water or aircraft (Sec. 261 (r), OEC); 8. Wearing of uniforms and bearing of arms. (Sec. 261 (s), OEC).
August 15, 2007 (TUE) to August 31, 2007 (FRI)	**CAMPAIGN PERIOD**	
August 23, 2007 (THU)	Last day for appointment of members of Plebiscite Committees and the City Plebiscite Board of Canvassers.	
August 26, 2007 (SUN) to Sept. 1, 2007 (SAT)	Posting of the Certified List of Voters as of the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections	
September 1, 2007 (SAT)	Inspection of polling places	
September 1, 2007 (SAT)	**EVE OF PLEBISCITE DAY**	1. Campaigning (Sec. 3, OEC); 2. Giving, accepting free transportation, foods, drinks, and things of value (Sec. 89, OEC); 3. Selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking intoxicating liquor (Sec. 261 (dd), OEC);
Sept. 2, 2007 (SUN)	**PLEBISCITE DAY**	1. Cockfighting and other forms of gambling, holding fairs, boxing and/or any other similar sports. (Sec. 261 (dd), OEC); 2. Giving, accepting free transportation, food, drinks, and things of value (Sec. 89, OEC). 3. Selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking intoxicating liquor, etc. (Sec. 261 (dd), OEC); 4. Opening of booths or stalls for the sale of merchandise, refreshment, etc. within a radius of 30 meters from polling place (Sec. 261 (dd) (2), OEC); 5. Campaigning (Sec. 3, OEC); 6. Soliciting votes or undertaking any propaganda for or against any candidate or any political party within the polling place or within thirty (30) meters thereof (Sec. 261 (cc), OEC); 7. Voting more than once or in substitution of another (Sec. 261 (z) (2) and (3), OEC).
	Convening of Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers (MPBC) (4:00 p.m.)	
Sept. 6, 2007 (FRI)	**LAST DAY OF PLEBISCITE PERIOD**	

Let this Resolution be published by the Education and Information Department in a newspaper of general circulation. The Deputy Executive Director for Operations shall furnish the Regional Election Director of Region VII; the Provincial Election Supervisor of Cebu; the Election Officer of Naga, Cebu; the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government; the Secretary of the Department of Education; the Municipal Mayor, the Municipal Treasurer, and the DepEd District Supervisor of Naga, Cebu, with a copy of this Resolution.

The EO of Naga, Cebu shall give this Resolution the widest publicity in the municipality.

This Resolution shall take effect upon its publication.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI – August 25, 2007)

Hollywood-worthy Filipino story

THEY WERE DEFINITELY NEWSworthy stories. Hollywood director Quentin Tarantino experienced riding a *padyak* (pedi-cab) to get out of the flood and had to wear a barong over jogging pants to receive a lifetime achievement award; while President Macapagal-Arroyo got stuck in the flood. (INQUIRER, 8/16/07)

I'm not saying that I was happy to hear Ms Arroyo caught in such a predicament. But at last a high official of the national government, the President at that, had that "close encounter" with floods. For decades now, the national government has not been serious about addressing the problem. Pumping stations may have been built, but do they work at the time people need them to work?

I just hope the President and her administration learned something from the experience and that this will not remain a laughing matter to them, not unless they want to make a movie out of that experience. I mean, Hollywood would get to hear the story. As director Tikoy Aguiluz said, "It's another Filipino story he (Tarantino) will tell in Hollywood."

—KARLO RESPICIO,
karlorespicio@gmail.com

GSIS has right to due process, too

IN HER COLUMN, "THE PERSUAsive powers of GSIS" (INQUIRER, 8/18/07), Solita Collas-Monsod rakes up old charges against the Government Service Insurance System. The charges had all been resolved in favor of the GSIS.

For instance, she writes that two years ago the Court of Appeals issued a writ of preliminary injunction against the Special Audit Team (SAT) of the Commission on Audit on certain GSIS transactions. This injunction has not yet been lifted, according to Monsod. Is this the fault of the GSIS?

She also stated that the GSIS has filed administrative and criminal cases against the members of the SAT, headed by Leonor Boado? She described this as "intimidating." Since when has the filing of administrative and criminal cases against government officials been "intimidating"?

We all know that resorting to due process, such as the filing of administrative and criminal cases before the proper administrative and judicial bodies, is a right guaranteed by the Constitution and the law. Since when has the exercise of a legal and constitutional right become "intimidating"?

The GSIS has also shown to the satisfaction of everybody that the grant of the eCard project to Union Bank was aboveboard and that Union Bank is fully qualified to provide the service, financially as well as technically. Up to now, complaints against the eCard have died down as the eCard has proven its worth as the best system to serve GSIS pensioners and members.

Monsod seems to favor Land Bank as the eCard provider. However, she should know that Land Bank did not participate in the bidding for lack of capacity to undertake the service. Union Bank submitted the best bid.

So, what's Monsod's beef?

—RAYMUND RONILLO,
412 Auburn St.,
Parañaque City

What if GIs help fight terrorists in RP?

IN REFERENCE TO THE EDITOrial "Combat Joe" (INQUIRER, 8/17/07), what's wrong if there are GIs helping our soldiers fight terrorists?

The terrorists are doing this country great harm. Don't you realize this?

—ROMULO MURILLO,
murilloro@who.int

PMA song composer

MAY I ADD A LITTLE FOOTNOTE to the column of Ramon J. Farolan on Commodore Jose Francisco. ("Grand old man of the Philippine Navy," INQUIRER, 7/30/07) Farolan said that it was Capt. Quirico Evangelista who composed the alma mater song of the Philippine Military Academy.

I wonder how I can reconcile this with the claim of the late retired Army Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Mendoza, (Batch '36, Class '40) that he wrote "PMA, O Hail to Thee" in his second year at the PMA. Mendoza, from Aparri, Cagayan, was one of Batch '36's four cadets from Cagayan province, the others being Justiniano P. Cortez from Ballesteros, Juan Kanapi from Tuguegarao and Damian Pabon from Baggao.

—ORLY PALACPAC,
orly1028@yahoo.com

Gen. Ramon J. Farolan, says that the official stand of the Philippine Military Academy is that its Alma Mater song ("PMA, Oh Hail To Thee") was composed by Quirico Evangelista with lyrics written by Reynaldo Mendoza. Incidentally, both gentlemen belong to PMA Class 1940.—Ed.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Sack GSIS chief

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE column "The persuasive powers of GSIS," written by acclaimed economist Solita Collas-Monsod. (INQUIRER, 8/18/07) I found it quite disturbing.

We saw again the blatant abuse of power by high officials of the Government Service Insurance System. They filed administrative and criminal charges against the members of the Special Audit Team (SAT) of the Commission on Audit not only to hit back but also to intimidate present and future investigators and prosecutors.

If President Macapagal-Arroyo sincerely feels for government workers, she should not only increase their salaries, she should also sack GSIS chief Winston Garcia.

Over the years, there have been numerous complaints from retired government workers about delayed pensions. Many of these retirees have written the INQUIRER, as last recourse, after the GSIS didn't act on their complaints. Many of the problems they complained about persist to this day.

On the other hand, there are reports that while the retirees are having a hard time getting their well-deserved pensions, GSIS officials have favored themselves with incredible cash incentives and fat retirement packages.

Firing the GSIS chief would send a clear message that the President truly shares their needs and concerns.

But I may be expecting too much from an administration that rewards bullies and jails do-gooders in government.

—EDWARD FELIX M. DONATO,
edwardfelixdonato
@yahoo.com.ph

If the first stroke doesn't kill you, the second one might.

To know how you can prevent stroke, call 722-5877 or visit www.strokesocietyphil.org.
Rm 1403 North Tower, CHBC Bldg., St. Luke's Medical Center, E. Rodriguez Ave., Quezon City

The STROKE SOCIETY of the PHILIPPINES

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF THE PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE CONVERSION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NAGA, INTO A COMPONENT CITY IN THE PROVINCE OF CEBU TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF NAGA, PURSUANT TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9491 TO BE,CONDUCTED ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2007.
x-----------------------x

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Jr. Florentino A.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 23 August 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 8280

The Commission on Elections, by virtue of the powers conferred upon it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, the Local Government Code of 1991, Republic Act No. 7166, Republic Act No. 9491 and other election laws, **RESOLVED** to promulgate, as it hereby **RESOLVES** to promulgate, the following rules and regulations to govern the conduct of the plebiscite to ratify the conversion of the Municipality of Naga into a component city in the Province of Cebu to be known as the City of Naga.

SEC. 1. Supervision and control. – The Commission on Elections shall have direct control and supervision over the conduct of the plebiscite.

SEC. 2. Expenses and election forms and paraphernalia. – The expenses in holding the plebiscite, which shall include the printing of official ballots, plebiscite returns and other forms; the procurement of supplies and paraphernalia; the *per diems* of the members of the Plebiscite Committees, the overtime compensation of the Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers (the MPBOC) including the Plebiscite sub canvassing committee and their support staff; other operational and incidental expenses; and the costs of publication of resolutions and information materials, shall be borne by the Municipality of Cebu.

For this purpose, the Deputy Executive Director for Operations (ODEDO) shall prepare the budgetary requirements for the holding of the plebiscite; and require the proponent to immediately appropriate and remit the necessary amount.

The Committees on Allocation, Printing, Reception and Verification, Packing and Shipping, the Information Technology Department and Administrative Services Department shall prepare their itemized administrative, operational and technical budgetary needs, which shall be reviewed, consolidated and approved by the ODEDO.

SEC. 3. Posting of Republic Act No. 9491 – At least ten (10) days prior to the day of the plebiscite, the EO of Cebu shall cause the posting of copies of R.A. No. 9491 in all the polling places of Cebu.

SEC. 4. Information campaign – An objective information campaign shall be conducted in the whole of Cebu, to commence on August 15, 2007. During this period, civic, professional, religious, business, youth and any other similar organizations may hold symposia, public rallies or meetings to enlighten the voters of Naga on the plebiscite issues, and to campaign for or against the ratification of R.A. No. 9491. Constructive discussions and debates shall be encouraged and the voters assured of the freedom to voice their opinion regarding the issues, advantages or disadvantageous thereof.

The EO of Naga, Cebu, in coordination with the local government officials, mass media, NGOs and religious groups shall convene barangay assemblies or *"pulong-pulongs"* for such constructive discussions and debates.

SEC. 5. Date of plebiscite and voting hours. – The plebiscite shall be held on September 2, 2007. The voting shall start at seven o'clock in the morning and end at three o'clock in the afternoon.

SEC. 6. Area of coverage. – The plebiscite shall be held in the whole Municipality of Naga.

SEC. 7. Who may vote. – All qualified voters of Naga duly registered as of the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections are entitled to vote in the plebiscite.

The EO of Naga shall prepare the lists of voters for use in the plebiscite in accordance with Section 11 hereof.

SEC. 8. Plebiscite Committee Composition, Compensation, Duties and Functions. – The voting and counting of votes shall be conducted in each polling place by a Plebiscite Committee composed of a Chairman, a Poll Clerk and a Third Member who shall all be public school teachers, to be appointed by the Commission through the EO of Naga. In case there are not enough public school teachers, the EO shall appoint teachers in private schools, employees in the civil service, or other citizens of known probity and competence who are registered voters of the municipality, provided that the Chairman of the Committee shall be a public school teacher.

Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to a *per diem* of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for services rendered on the day of the plebiscite.

The Committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) Supervise and conduct the voting in the polling place on September 2, 2007;
(b) Count the votes and thereafter prepare the plebiscite returns and other required documents/reports and distribute the same as herein provided;
(c) Furnish watchers certificate of votes upon request;
(d) Return the book/s of voters to the EO, through the principal of the polling centers, and deliver the other plebiscite paraphernalia to the respective custodians for safekeeping not later than September 3, 2007.
(e) Act as deputies of the Commission in the supervision and control of the plebiscite in the polling places wherein they are assigned to ensure the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible plebiscite;
(f) Maintain order within the polling place and its premises, to keep access thereto, open and unobstructed, and to enforce obedience to its lawful orders.

If any person shall refuse to obey lawful orders of the Committee or shall conduct himself in a disorderly manner in its presence or within its hearing thereby interrupting or disturbing its proceedings, the Committee may issue an order in writing directing any peace officer to take such person into custody until the adjournment of the meeting, but such order shall not be executed as to prevent the person so taken into custody from exercising his right to vote. Such order shall be executed by any peace officer to whom it may be delivered, but if none is present, by any other person deputized by the Committee in writing; and

(g) Perform such other functions/duties as may be prescribed by the Commission.

SEC. 9. Disqualifications. – (a) No person shall serve as chairman or member of the Committee if he is related within the fourth civil degree or consanguinity or affinity to any member of the same Committee.

(b) No member of the Committee shall engage, directly or indirectly, in any partisan political activity or take part in the plebiscite, except to discharge his duties as such, and to vote provided he is a registered voter of Naga, Cebu.

SEC. 10. Precincts and polling places. – The precincts established for the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections shall be the same precincts to be used in the September 2, 2007 plebiscite.

SEC. 11. Precinct Level Computerized Voters List (PCVL) and Election Day Computerized Voters Lists (EDCVL). – The EO of Naga, Cebu shall print four (4) copies of PCVL which shall be certified by the Election Registration Board (ERB). The two (2) copies of the PCVL shall be given to the Committees for use on plebiscite day. The other two (2) copies of the PCVL shall be distributed as follows:

(a) One copy for posting at the Office of the Election Officer of Naga, Cebu; and
(b) One copy for posting at the bulletin board of the Municipal Hall of Naga, Cebu.

The Information Technology Department shall print one (1) copy of the Election Day Computerized Voters List (EDCVL).

SEC. 12. Distribution of Plebiscite Forms and Supplies. – The Municipal Treasurer shall, in coordination with the EO concerned, distribute the plebiscite forms and supplies to the Committees. The EO or his authorized representatives shall release the Books of Voters, the PCVL and EDCVL to the School Principal concerned who shall in turn release them to the Plebiscite Committees.

SEC. 13. Official Ballots. – The official ballots shall be distributed at the ratio of one ballot per voter.

The official ballots to be used in the plebiscite shall bear the following heading **"OFFICIAL BALLOT"; "PLEBISCITE"; "September 2, 2007"; "NAGA, CEBU"**; and underneath the following instructions: "Fill out this ballot secretly inside the booth. Do not put any distinctive mark on any part of this ballot."

The following question shall be provided in the official ballots:

"DO YOU APPROVE OF THE CONVERSION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NAGA, CEBU INTO A COMPONENT CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF NAGA, PURSUANT TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9491?" ☐

SEC. 14. Preliminaries to the Counting of Votes. – (a) The Committee shall clear the table of all unnecessary writing paraphernalia.

(b) The Committee shall open the ballot box, take out the ballots from the compartment for valid ballots and, without unfolding our exposing their contents, examine them using the following guidelines:

1. Ballots folded together – The Committee shall ascertain that each fold consists of a single ballot.
   If in the course of the examination, ballots are found folded together before they were deposited in the ballot box, they shall be placed in an envelope for excess ballots.
2. Excess ballots – The Committee shall count the ballots and compare the number of ballots with the number of voters who actually voted.
   If there are more ballots than the number of voters who actually voted, follow the procedures provided for in Sec. 16 hereof.
3. Ballots with detachable coupons – In case ballots with their detachable coupon are found in the box, the coupon shall be detached and deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots, and the ballots shall be included in the pile of valid ballots.
4. Ballots with the word "spoiled" – If ballots with the word "spoiled" should be found, they shall be placed in the compartment for spoiled ballots.
   The ballots deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots shall be presumed to be spoiled ballots, whether or not they contain such notation; but if the Committee should find that during the voting any valid ballot was erroneously deposited in this compartment, or if any ballot separated as excess or marked had been erroneously deposited therein, the Committee shall open said compartment after the voting and before the counting of votes for the sole purpose of drawing out the ballots erroneously deposited therein.
   It shall then prepare and sign a statement of such fact and lock the box with its three keys immediately thereafter. The valid ballots so withdrawn shall be mixed with the other valid ballots, and the excess or marked ballots shall be placed in their proper envelopes which shall for such purposes be opened and again labeled, sealed, signed and kept as hereinafter provided.

(c) Excess and spoiled ballots shall not be read in the counting of votes.

(d) The poll clerk shall take hold of the plebiscite returns and the third member shall tack the tally board on the blackboard or any available space within the plain view of the Committee, watchers and the public.

SEC. 15. Manner of Counting of Votes. – The counting of votes shall be public without interruption or delay until completed and shall proceed as follows:

a. The Committee shall open the ballot box, take out the ballots and without unfolding them or exposing their contents except so far as to ascertain that each ballot is single, compare the number of ballots in the box with the number of voters who actually voted as recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting.
b. If there are more ballots found than there are voters who actually voted, all the ballots shall be returned inside the box and thoroughly mixed therein. The Poll Clerk, without seeing the ballots and with his back to the box, shall publicly draw out as many ballots as may be equal to the excess, and without unfolding them, place them in an envelope which shall be marked "excess ballots," sealed and signed by the Committee.
   If there are no excess or the excess has been taken out, the Committee shall form separate piles of 100 ballots each which shall be held together by rubber band.
c. The Chairman shall take the ballots of the first pile and read the ballots one by one, while the Poll Clerk and Third Member shall simultaneously record on the plebiscite returns and tally board, respectively, each vote as it is read by the Chairman.
   Each vote shall be recorded by a vertical line, except every fifth vote, which shall be recorded by a diagonal line crossing the previous four vertical lines.
   After finishing the first pile, the Committee shall count the tallies for the Affirmative and Negative votes and record the sub-totals in the column immediately after the last *tara* recorded in the plebiscite returns and tally board, respectively.
   The Poll Clerk and the Third Member shall compare the tallies reflected in the plebiscite returns and tally board.
   In case of discrepancy, a recount shall be made. The ballots shall again be grouped together as before the reading.
d. Thereafter, the same procedures shall be followed with the second and subsequent piles of ballots.
e. After all the ballots for the precinct have been counted, the Committee shall:
   1. Sum up the sub-totals of recorded Affirmative and Negative Votes and enter the grand total in words and figure in the plebiscite returns and tally board;
   2. See to it that the entries in the first copy of the plebiscite returns are clearly impressed and reflected properly in the other two (2) copies;
   3. Sign and affix their thumb marks on the certification portion printed at the bottom of the plebiscite returns and tally board; and
   4. Place the counted ballots in an envelope provided for the purpose, close the envelope with a serially numbered paper seal, sign and deposit the same in the compartment for valid ballots. The accomplished tally board, certified by the Committee, shall also be deposited in the compartment for valid ballots.

SEC. 16. Appreciation of Ballots. – The provisions of Sec. 211 of the Omnibus Election Code whenever applicable, shall govern the appreciation of ballots. Any question on the appreciation of ballots shall be decided by majority vote of the Committee

No watcher or any other person inside the polling place shall be allowed to participate in the appreciation of ballots. However, any watcher may file a protest, which shall be recorded in the Minutes.

SEC. 17. Plebiscite Returns and Distribution of Copies Thereof. – Plebiscite returns shall be prepared in three (3) copies. All the members of the Committee shall sign the certification printed at the bottom of the plebiscite returns and affix their respective thumb marks on the space provided.

Upon completion of the plebiscite returns, each copy shall be placed in separate envelopes provided for the purpose, and the Committee shall immediately distribute the same under proper receipt, as follows:

(1) The first copy, to the Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers;
(2) The second copy, to the Election Records and Statistics Department of the Commission in Manila; and
(3) The third copy shall be deposited inside the ballot box.

SEC. 18. Announcement of Results. – Upon completion of the plebiscite returns, the Chairman of the Committee shall orally and publicly announce the total number of Affirmative and Negative Votes cast and counted in the precinct.

SEC. 19. Alterations and Corrections of Plebiscite Returns. – Any correction or alteration made in the plebiscite returns by the Committee before the announcement of the results of the plebiscite in the polling place shall be duly initialed by all the members thereof.

After the announcement of the results of the plebiscite, the Committee shall not make any alteration or amendment in any of the copies of the returns, unless ordered by the Commission.

SEC. 20. Certificates of Votes. – Before leaving the precinct, the Committee shall issue a Certificate of Votes to the watchers upon the latter's request.

SEC. 21. Delivery of the Ballot Boxes, and Other Supplies and Documents, Preservation of Voting Records, Ballot Boxes and their Keys, and their Disposition. – The provisions of Section 217, 218 and 219 of the Omnibus Election Code on delivery of ballot boxes, keys and election supplies and documents, preservation of the voting records and ballot boxes, and their keys and disposition of their contents shall apply to the plebiscite governed by this Resolution.

SEC. 22. Plebiscite Board of Canvassers. – There shall be one (1) Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers (the MPBC), which shall consist of the Election Officer, as Chairman, the Municipal Treasurer as Vice-Chairman, and the highest ranking official of the Department of Education in Naga, Cebu as third member-Secretary, to canvass the plebiscite returns submitted by the Committees. The MPBC may create three sub-canvassing committee as may be necessary to expedite the canvass of the plebiscite results in the two hundred thirty-seven (237) clustered precincts.

At least five (5) days before the day of the plebiscite, the chairman shall issue a written notice to the other members of the MPBC that it shall convene at four o'clock in the afternoon of plebiscite day to canvass the plebiscite returns. Notice of said convening shall also be posted in conspicuous places in the Municipal Hall and other public places in Naga, Cebu. The MPBC shall meet at the Municipal Session Hall of Naga not later than four o'clock in the afternoon of plebiscite day and shall immediately canvass the plebiscite returns and shall not adjourn until the canvass is completed.

SEC. 23. Supervision and Control over the Board. – The Commission shall have direct control of and supervision over the Board and may *motu proprio* relieve at any time any member thereof for cause and may substitute him in accordance with Sec. 26 hereof.

SEC. 24. Absence of a Regular Member. – In case of absence of a regular member, the members present shall first verify whether or not the notice stating the date, time and place of canvassing has been duly served on the absent regular member.

In the absence of such notice. One shall be immediately sent to the absent member. If the latter cannot be located, or his whereabouts are unknown, he shall then be substituted. These facts shall be recorded in the respective minutes of the MPBC. As soon as the absent member appears, the substitute member shall relinquish his seat to the regular member.

SEC. 25. Incapacitated Regular Member. – In case of sickness or serious injury of the regular member, a sworn medical certificate shall be required attesting to the incapacity of said member. Upon submission of the medical certificate, a substitute shall be appointed. Said certificate shall be recorded in the Minutes of the MPBC.

SEC. 26. Substitution of Chairman and Members. – In case of non-availability, absence, disqualification due to relationship, or incapacity for any cause of the chairman, the Commission shall appoint a lawyer of the Commission as substitute. With respect to other members of the MPBC, the Commission shall appoint as substitute the following in the order named: Municipal Administrator, the Municipal Assessor, the Clerk of Court nominated by the Executive Judge of the Municipal Trial Court, and other available appointive Municipal official.

SEC. 27. Prohibition Against Leaving Official Station. – During the period beginning September 2, 2007 until the completion of the canvass, no member or substitute member of the MPBC shall be transferred, assigned or detailed outside of his official station nor shall he leave his station without prior authority of the Commission.

SEC. 28. Quorum. – A majority of the members of the MPBC shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of all the members thereof shall be necessary to render a decision.

SEC. 29. Watchers: Rights and Duties. – The proponents and oppositions, registered political parties or coalition of political parties, the citizens' arm of the Commission, if any, and other accredited groups or organizations may appoint watchers during the voting, counting and canvassing. A person who is not a registered voter of Naga, Cebu, of questionable reputation, or who has been convicted of an election offense or any other crime shall not be appointed as watcher. Barangay officials, including *barangay tanods*, are disqualified to serve as watchers.

The watchers shall have the right to:

(a) be present at, and take note of all the proceedings;
(b) read the plebiscite returns without touching them; and
(c) file a protest against any irregularity noted in the plebiscite return or in the proceedings of the Board and obtain the resolution thereon in writing.

The watcher shall not be allowed to participate in the deliberation of the Board.

SEC. 30. Right to be Present and to Counsel. – Proponents or oppositors have the right to be present and to counsel during the canvass of the returns. Only one counsel shall argue for the proponent or oppositor. In case there are several counsel for the proponents or oppositors, they shall agree among themselves who will argue for them.

SEC. 31. Internal Canvassing Procedures. – The MPBC shall canvass the plebiscite returns in the following manner:

a. The Chairman of the MPBC shall list subsequentially all precincts in the Statement of Votes by precinct (SOVP) and ensure that every precinct in the project of precincts is listed therein. The MPBC Chairman shall produce before the members, the ballot boxes containing plebiscite returns;
b. Before opening a ballot box, the MPBC shall record the conditions and serial numbers of the ballot boxes and the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seals;
c. The Chairman of the MPBC shall then open the ballot box, retrieve the envelopes containing plebiscite returns and record in its Minutes of Canvass, the condition and serial number of the envelopes and their paper seals;
d. The Chairman of the MPBC shall open the envelope one at a time, record the condition and serial number of the returns and its paper seal, and forthwith open the same for canvassing.
   Only such number of envelopes containing plebiscite returns that can be canvassed during the meeting of the board shall be opened which number shall be recorded in the Minutes of Canvass.
   Entries in the SOV by Precinct shall be made every time a plebiscite return is canvassed. Once all the columns of the SOV are filled up, the members of the MPBC shall sum up the number of precincts canvassed, the number of registered voters, the number of voters who actually voted, and the total Affirmative and Negative votes therein, and thereafter affix their initials below their names appearing at the certification portion of the form;
e. In case its copy of a plebiscite returns is missing, the MPBC shall, obtain such missing returns from the Plebiscite Committee concerned. If said returns have been lost or destroyed, the MPBC, upon prior authority of the Commission through the Regional Election Director, may use any of the authentic copies of said returns or a certified copy thereof. Forthwith, the MPBC shall refer the case for investigation to the Regional Election Director of Region VII who shall report his findings to the Commission; and
f. Each time the MPBC suspends its meetings or adjourns for the purpose of awaiting for the other plebiscite returns, it shall:
   1. Determine the totals of all Affirmative and Negative votes canvassed;
   2. Accomplish the SOV by precinct and close the same with the initials of the members following the last entry of Affirmative and Negative votes;
   3. Place the SOVP in an envelope, which shall be sealed with a serially numbered paper seal and signed by the members in the presence of all the members of the board and the watchers; and
   4. Place the plebiscite returns already canvassed, the remaining unopened envelopes, and envelope containing a copy of the SOVP inside a ballot box which shall be locked with three padlocks and a self-locking metal seal, the serial number of which shall be duly recorded in the Minutes of Canvass.
      Each member of the MPBC shall keep a key to the three padlocks of a ballot box, so that it cannot be opened without all of them being present. The ballot box shall be deposited in a secured room for safekeeping until the resumption of its meeting.
   5. At the resumption of the canvass, the secretary of the MPBC shall:
      a. Get the ballot box from the secured room and verify the condition of the ballot box, the three padlocks and the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seal;
      b. Enter in the Minutes a description of the condition thereof, as well as the serial number of the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seals;
      c. Destroy the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seals in the presence of the other members of the board and watchers; and
      d. Present to the MPBC the remaining unopened envelopes containing plebiscite returns and the official SOVP contained in a duly sealed and signed envelope.
   6. After all the plebiscite returns assigned to it have been canvassed, the MPBC concerned shall:
      a. Prepare a tally of the total affirmative and negative votes including the data on the number of registered voters, number of voters who actually voted, and the total number of precincts it has canvassed. Such tally should be publicly accessible to ensure transparency; and
      b. Place the plebiscite returns copy for the MPBC in their respective envelopes and deposit the same inside the ballot box which shall be locked with three padlocks and sealed with a self-locking metal seal.
   7. Each member of the MPBC shall keep a key corresponding to the three padlocks of the ballot box.

SEC. 32. Minutes of the Canvass of the MPBC. – The MPBC shall prepare three (3) copies of the Minutes of the Canvass.

The first copy shall be submitted by the Secretary of the MPBC to the Law Department of the Commission within ten (10) days from termination of canvass. The second copy shall be deposited inside the ballot box. The third copy shall be forwarded to the Office of the Deputy Executive Director for Operations.

SEC. 33. Completion of the Canvass. – The MPBC shall sign the certification and affix their thumbmarks at the bottom of each SOVP, and, using a separate SOVP, consolidate the data including the total Affirmative and Negative votes. Thereafter, it shall prepare a Certificate of Canvass and Proclamation (COCP) which shall contain the following data:

1. number of precincts canvassed;
2. number of registered voters;
3. number of voters who actually voted;
4. number of affirmative and negative votes; and
5. whether or not the affirmative or negative votes constitute a majority of the votes cast.

The COCP shall be supported by an SOV by precinct. The members of the MPBC shall print their full names and affix their signatures and thumb marks in the proper space at the bottom of both forms and certify under oath that the entries therein are true and correct.

SEC. 34. Distribution of the COCP. – The COCP shall be prepared in four (4) copies, supported by a Statement of Votes per Precinct, and distributed as follows:

(1) The original shall, within three (3) days from proclamation, be sent to the Election Records and Statistics Department of the Commission;
(2) The second copy shall be filed in the Office of the Election Officer;
(3) The third copy shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government; and
(4) The fourth copy shall be submitted to the Municipal Mayor of Naga, Cebu.

SEC. 35. Applicability of the Omnibus Election Code and Other Election Laws. – The pertinent provisions of the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Acts No. 7160, 7166 and 9491 and other election laws and resolutions of the Commission which are not inconsistent herewith shall, as far as practicable, apply to the plebiscite subject of this Resolution.

SEC. 36. Implementation. – The Office of the Executive Director, the Office of the Deputy Executive Director for Operations, assisted by the Election and Barangay Affairs Department, Finance Services Department, and Administrative Services Department, shall implement this Resolution to ensure the holding of a free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible plebiscite.

The Deputy Executive Director for Operations assisted by the Regional Election Director of Region VII shall supervise the conduct of the plebiscite.

SEC. 37. Dissemination. – Let this Resolution be published by the Education and Information Department (EID) in one newspaper of general circulation and in one newspaper of local circulation. The Deputy Executive Director for Operations shall furnish the Regional Election Director of Region VII; the Provincial Election Supervisor of Cebu Province; the Election Officer of Naga, Cebu; the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government; the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Municipal Mayor, the Municipal Treasurer and the DepEd District Supervisor of Naga, with a copy of this Resolution.

The EO of Naga, Cebu shall give this Resolution the widest publicity in the municipality.

SEC. 38. Effectivity – This Resolution shall take effect upon its publication.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI – August 25, 2007)

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Mud crabs rule Samar town festival

By Vicente S. Labro
City of Catbalogan

THEY JUMPED, ROLLED, SWAGGERED AND crawled to the rhythm of the drums, unmindful of the heat of the midday sun.

Wearing colorful costumes, with some of them dressed as mud crabs, these nearly 80 young people from Sta. Margarita, Samar performed the Alimango Festival that depicts the raising or gathering of mud crabs, the town's main livelihood.

The fast beat and outstanding performance of the festival dancers did not fail to wow the huge crowd and to get the nod of the festival competition judges, who unanimously voted it as the best street dancing group.

The festival defeated other contenders like the Bagolan Festival of Paranas town (3rd place) and the Sapyawan Festival of Catbalogan (2nd place), which showcased the town's coconut industry and fishing industry, respectively.

The street dancing contest, dubbed Battle of Festivals, was among the activities held in the week-long celebration of Samar Day on Aug. 11 this year. Among the other activities were the Search for Mutya ng Samar, Agro-Industrial Fair, sports competition, and the Governor's/Congressional/Mayors' Night socials.

Gov. Milagrosa Tan, her daughter, Rep. Sharee Tan (1st district, Samar), and Vice Gov. Jesus Redaja led provincial officials in welcoming the guests and visitors in this year's 11th Samar Day celebration.

Calbayog City Mayor Mel Senen Sarmiento and Vice Mayor Ronaldo Aquino, together with mayors from some of the other Samar towns as well as council members, were among those who joined the celebration that was held in the City of Catbalogan, the provincial capital, on Aug. 11.

Sta. Margarita Mayor Alfredo Serrano said he was very happy with the outcome of the results of the contests because they did not only win the P50,000 prize for the street dancing contest but their giant mud crab-designed float also won for them another top prize of P50,000.

"We also won in the best choreographer category," he added.

Unite Samar's culture

"We are trying to unite the culture of Samar and advertise it to the nation," said Jover Laurio, tourism officer-designate, referring to the festival.

ALIMANGO Festival dancers in action.
VICENTE S. LABRO

Laurio disclosed that by September this year the province will join the Travel Mart where they will showcase not only the products of Samar but also the province's tourist attractions like the caves, waterfalls, beaches and nature parks.

The province started its celebration of the Samar Day on Aug. 11, 1977, although it was supposed to be 156 years old already.

The Samar Historical Committee recommended to the provincial government that Samar Day be based on the Aug. 11, 1841 date when Queen Isabella III of Spain signed a Royal Decree establishing Samar as a military province separate from Leyte.

Earlier, Samar Day was celebrated every Nov. 10, commemorating the election for the first time of local officials in the three newly created provinces in Samar Island.

The Samar Division Act or Republic Act No. 4221, which was enacted on June 19, 1965, divided the then island province of Samar into the provinces of Western Samar, Northern Samar and Eastern Samar. Western Samar was later renamed by an act of Congress as Samar province.

But during the martial law years, the celebration of Samar Day was held every Aug. 23, the day before Catbalogan, the ancient capital town of Samar that became a city just last July, holds its annual fiesta.

On Aug. 24, the Catbaloganons once again celebrated the feast day of St. Bartholomew, by thanking their patron saint for all the bounties that came their way and probably by also praying to God to give a better year ahead for their beloved Samar, the country's third largest island.

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mas kumpleto
with Centrum.

Angel may have already gotten everything she could ask for in a showbiz career, but that does not stop her from pushing beyond her limits. "Gusto ko mas maraming magawa," she says. Angel continues to work towards helping more people, establishing her own business and realizing her dreams for her family, along with even greater dreams for herself. Behind her drive to be the best that she can be is her desire to someday achieve the feeling of being complete.

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Centrum is for people like Angel who want to be complete. It has the essential vitamins and minerals working together, to help you do all you need to do.

Getting closer to a dream orchestra in Iloilo City

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

INSPIRED BY STORIES THAT HER GRANDFATHER was once a conductor of a local orchestra and that school orchestra competitions drew huge crowds in Iloilo decades ago, a 36-year-old Filipina, born in Manila but who grew up in Canada, has set her mind on forming an orchestra in Iloilo City.

Finding nothing to start with, Melissa Lopez-Exmundo opened classes in violin, teaching children from three years old and up, hoping to build a base for a chamber orchestra she dreams of.

Exmundo is among those who reversed the migration of professionals to North America and elsewhere. In 1998, she decided to stay in Jaro district and teach because she was amazed by the talent she was able to coax from her young students, who are now saying they want to be musicians playing in an orchestra.

In a country where beauty parlors and movie theaters overwhelmingly outnumber concert and music halls, Exmundo's effort caused naysayers to shake their heads, probably until they saw her students straining their bows to get the right sound from their violins.

"I missed watching opera and playing in orchestra (in Europe and Canada). Sometimes I am invited to play in Manila. But if I create opportunities here, I could enjoy it too," she said.

In other countries, the way to join an orchestra is to take lessons and audition to join the orchestra. What Exmundo did was unusual. She gave group lessons to train children in orchestra playing. If they are serious about their music, they can audition for an orchestra later.

Melissa taught violin at the University of San Agustin and Central Philippine University. She also taught French at the University of the Philippines-Visayas campus and West Visayas State University. But she wasn't happy with the results of her violin classes because many of her adult students were taking lessons mainly for academic credits and less for the love of music.

'Twinkle Twinkle'

"The problem with adults is that they have an expectation of what they should sound like, and if they don't get results, they give up sooner. Their arms are not that supple. Adult students are more busy and hard on themselves. Kids are more resilient and they don't mind playing 'Twinkle Twinkle,'" she said.

Exmundo started giving private violin lessons in June 2002. "I had no name, just a private class and all by word of mouth," she said.

Classes

Her class of seven students grew to 20 and later an average of 25 to 30 per module. Since then, more than 50 students have attended her class, some of them on a continuing basis. Others have started coming, brought by their parents who heard about Exmundo or have seen her students perform in a recital. She didn't turn them away even if her classes were already big because many of the children have showed promise at such young age of three or four, which is about the same age she started to play a violin.

Exmundo and her family migrated to Canada when she was two years old. She remembered playing with pseudo violin when she was three. She had a Hungarian violin teacher until she was six years old and she continued to take private lessons. She graduated from the University of Toronto with a bachelor's degree in Music Performance.

In Toronto she played in and coached youth orchestra and ensembles. She went to Prague in 1993 and stayed for a year to take private lessons in violin under Professor Ivan Strauss.

She went to Japan to teach English and in preparing for her trip she took lessons on teaching English as a second language. The experience helped her prepare for violin teaching years later.

Even if she was not trained in music education, she reads up on strategies in teaching music and designs modules that combine the Suzuki method and the conservatory way of learning music. Each module ends with a performance, which is the most-awaited part by students and their parents.

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Aid sent to antiterror war evacuees

COTABATO CITY—THE Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) government is rushing the delivery of P1 million worth of additional relief goods to some 4,000 families displaced by the clashes in Sulu and Basilan.

ARMM officials said they were expecting the number of displaced residents to increase as the military announced that it would intensify the campaign against the Abu Sayyaf and its allies in the two provinces.

On Thursday, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the military to crush the Abu Sayyaf but cautioned it against moves that could derail the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Armed Forces chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said the military would like to see the Abu Sayyaf—estimated to have about 350 members in the two provinces—to be neutralized in two months.

The military has already suffered 57 fatalities since July due to the operations but Esperon said their efforts were not futile because in exchange, 42 bandits had been killed and a major Abu Sayyaf camp has been captured in Basilan on Aug. 18.

ARMM Executive Secretary Oscar Sampulna said the health and social welfare departments were given P500,000 each by Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan for the purchase of rice, canned goods, dried fish, clothing, beddings, and assorted medicines.

Dr. Tahir Sulaik, ARMM health secretary, said cough and colds were the common ailments brought to their attention in various evacuation centers in Basilan and Sulu.

"It's good to know that there was no disease outbreak," he said.

Sulaik said despite their displacement, residents have maintained the healthy condition of evacuation centers through the help of officials and other agencies.

The early conduct of immunization among children and the giving of vitamins also prevented the spread of waterborne diseases, Sulaik said.

Racma Ambolodto-Imam, social welfare regional secretary, said the relief distribution "is a continuous process."

"It would go on until such time that these evacuees shall have returned to their places of origin," she said.

Esperon did not issue a commitment as to when the campaign would be over but said the military was doing its best to avoid any collateral damage.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development has joined humanitarian operations in Basilan and Sulu as it shipped thousands of food packs, clothes and toys last Thursday.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said no evacuation center has been set up yet in Basilan.

Cabral said the DSWD has spent P1.4 million so far for relief assistance.

Just as government soldiers were pounding Abu Sayyaf positions with gunfire and bombs, the military said it was sending more soldiers, not to add manpower to the offensive, but to start rehabilitation of areas in Basilan that would be destroyed by the fighting. *Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao and Jo Uy and Christine Avendaño in Manila*

WELCOME TO KALINGA

EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

A taste of Kalinga culture means staying at this homestead in Tinglayan, Kalinga. Travellers are always welcome there, and foreigners often elect to stay with couples like this pair.

Raps vs 3rd review center in cheating sought

BAGUIO CITY—THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation lost vital evidence that would have incriminated a third nursing review center to cheating in the June 2006 licensure exams, the Baguio nurses, who exposed the scandal, claimed here on Friday.

Cyndi Erfe, one of the three nurses who first complained to the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) about the cheating, said this was the explanation they received why only the Ray A. Gapuz Nursing Review Center and the Inress Review Center were charged this week by the Department of Justice.

Erfe said the whistleblowers had asked the PRC to seek reconsideration from the DOJ to also charge the Pentagon Nursing Review Center, which also has a branch in Baguio.

"I am happy that the DOJ finally [pursued] criminal charges against Gapuz [but] we also gave them all our evidence against Pentagon. The NBI told us they included all evidence in their report which they forwarded to the DOJ, but the DOJ said that the evidence was not included in the NBI report," Erfe said.

"Then they will claim that the evidence against Pentagon is weak? Are they mocking us?," she said.

Pentagon employees declined to comment, when the INQUIRER reached their Baguio office, saying they were not in a position to discuss the charges.

Last year, they put out local advertisements announcing that their review sessions did not offer leaked questions.

In several press conferences here, lawyers of Ricarte Gapuz, the review center's executive director, already denied leaking answers to two sets of questionnaires during last year's board examinations in Baguio.

Mariz Paterno, a Nueva Ecija nurse who accused Pentagon of cheating, said she and her fellow examinees are meeting this weekend to discuss other legal options. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

BFAR to probe slaughter of dead whale in Sorsogon

SORSOGON CITY—A TEAM from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) would investigate the reported slaughter of the Bryde's Whale that was found off the coast of Barcelona, Sorsogon Wednesday, an official of the bureau told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The 42-foot Bryde's Whale, also known as Baleen Whale, died Wednesday after it beached at Barangay Tagdoni in Barcelona town, some 32 km from this city.

Santiago Noblefranca, officer in charge of the BFAR regional office, said the BFAR ordered an inquiry into the "feeding frenzy" that happened after officials from the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) and the Provincial Agriculture Office-Fishery Section left the area with an agreement with local officials to bury the dead whale and not allow residents to partake of it.

"It was a violation of our rules governing the disposition of dead, endangered and protected species," he said in a phone interview.

Tristan Paylado, head of BFAR's Stranding Team, said Fishery Administrative Order 208 prohibits the taking of endangered species for human consumption.

He said the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species states that whales and endangered animals should not be eaten to discourage their capture.

Paylado cited an incident in Ragay, Camarines Sur wherein a 30-foot long Sperm Whale was also found dead.

He said the whale was burned and the bones taken to the BFAR laboratory for scientific study. *Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Church, NGO leaders move to prevent mining bloodshed

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—Leaders of the Catholic Church and non-government organizations have stepped into a broiling mining controversy in upland Kasibu town here involving tribal folk who have been blocking the entry of a foreign mining firm into the village.

They have raised concerns over a possible face-off between 1,000 villagers and 50 policemen involving the implementation of a court order that allows the entry of equipment to be used by Oxiana Philippines Inc., an Australian firm.

On Friday, provincial sheriff Voltaire Garcia and Senior Supt. Segundo Duran, provincial police director, travelled to the site to implement the injunction order, which prohibits villagers from further barricading the road leading to the exploration site in Pao Village.

Hear no evil

In a statement, Bishop Ramon Villena assailed Oxiana for refusing to listen to the sentiments of the oppositors who have been barricading the road since July 12.

"Yes, Oxiana claims they have in their possession legal instruments that would legitimize their entry to Pao. But what about the voice of the people? Will we close our ears to their cry and continue with the mining activities in utter disregard of their voice?" Villena said in a statement.

SCENES such as this in a mining community in Diwalwal paint an ugly image of mining. JEFFREY TUPAS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

From 300 in the last few days, the number of protesters has grown to about 1,000, mostly tribal villagers from Pao, Paquet, Kakidugen, Biyoy, Cataraoan, Camamasi and Dine who continued to guard the barricade after learning of the court's issuance of an injunction order.

Their leaders, who asked not to be named for fear of being cited in contempt of the court, said they would continue to block the road because it traverses a private land, the owner of which was opposed to mining.

Contempt fear

"If it becomes necessary that we will go back to our headhunting practices, then so be it," a Bugkalot chieftain said in the dialect.

The villagers, composed of Bugkalot, Kalanguya and Ifugao, have been opposing the entry of Oxiana, citing possible hazards that its operations would bring to their environment.

They have also been questioning Oxiana's exploration permit issued in 2000, the period of which was extended without consultation with the affected local communities.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach for comment Joey Nelson Ayson, Oxiana country manager, and Lourdes Dolinen, liaison officer. They did not respond to requests for interview sent through their mobile phones.

Environment NGOs, including Alyansa Tigil Mina and Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (PNE), also joined the bishop's call for government agencies to pave the way for a peaceful settlement of the standoff in Pao.

Tribal rights

"We call on government to heed the call of indigenous communities living in the area to respect their beliefs, culture and way of life," said Merly Calubaquib, provincial manager of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

"Oxiana is riding roughshod over the residents because government is turning a blind eye on the IP's legitimate grievances," she said.

But as the company, with the help of government, showed determination to enter the area through force, villagers continued to fortify their positions, sources said.

Lucas Buay, an Ifugao and chair of the Council of Leaders of the Kasibu Inter-tribal Response Towards Ecological Development (Kired), said two barricades have been set up in Paquet Village.

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Revillame cleared in Ultra stampede

DOJ says inviting people to 'Wowowee' show not cause of incident

By Leila B. Salaverria and Marinel R. Cruz

TELEVISION HOST WILFREDO "WILLIE" REVILLAME was cleared of criminal liability in the February 2006 stampede that killed 71 people and injured hundreds.

REVILLAME

The incident happened during the anniversary celebration of Revillame's noontime variety show "Wowowee" at the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City.

In an Aug. 22 resolution, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez dismissed the complaint against Revillame for reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide and physical injuries. The decision was prompted by Revillame's petition to review a resolution in October 2006 of government prosecutors recommending the filing of criminal charges against the TV host and 16 other persons.

Revillame filed the petition independently of his 16 other co-respondents that included Ma. Rosario "Charo" Santos-Concio, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. vice president for entertainment; Ma. Socorro Vidanes, senior vice president for TV production; Marilou Almaden, executive producer; and Cipriano Luspo, assistant vice president and head of security.

Gonzalez said Revillame's invitation to people to attend the Wowowee anniversary show was not the "proximate" but rather the remote cause of the stampede. He said the crowds that responded to Revillame's invitation did not automatically lead to the stampede.

"The invitation was not, so to speak, the spark that eventually led to the explosion... More importantly, not by any stretch of the imagination can the act of Revillame, by itself, naturally and adequately lead to the stampede that killed 71 people and injured hundreds more," he said.

The justice secretary also said Revillame's invitation was aired during three pre-taped episodes before the show. The host could not have known that the crowd outside the arena was already massive and, hence, did not recklessly add to the congestion, Gonzalez said.

About 30,000 people were outside the show's venue although the Wowowee staff allegedly announced only 17,000 people would be allowed inside. When the crowd became uncontrollable, guards closed the gate, but the mob pushed forward. Some people fell to the ground and were trampled on and killed or injured.

Revillame's lawyer, Dexter Lacuanan, told the INQUIRER that Revillame was "humbled" by what happened. "He would also like to thank the people who stood by him and supported him throughout this whole ordeal."

Lacuanan added: "He also prays for the people behind the show who remain respondents to this case, and also wishes to express to the loved ones of those who perished or were hurt in the stampede that they remain his inspiration whenever he performs."

QC civil registrar files ₱1 million damage suit vs Caloocan counterpart

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE QUEZON CITY CIVIL REGISTRAR has filed a P1.1 million damage suit against his counterpart in Caloocan City for allegedly "besmirching his reputation and embarrassing him."

Ramon Matabang charged Lucena Flores with "incriminatory machination" for filing an estafa case against him in the Department of Justice. The case was dismissed in June.

Matabang, former president of the Philippine Association of Civil Registrars (PACR), said Flores accused him of misappropriating PACR funds amounting to P2.8 million from 1999 to 2005.

Flores, who succeeded Matabang as president of the organization, alleged that expenses reported by Matabang in financial statements submitted during the PACR's 6th and 7th national conventions were not supported by official receipts.

But in a June 28 resolution, State Prosecutor Susan Azarcon said Flores failed to prove her charges, as she dismissed the estafa case.

"The complaint was obviously frivolous and the defendant perjured in various counts, which criminal acts she committed willfully and maliciously to the great prejudice of plaintiff and his family," Matabang said in his complaint.

He added: "Thus, by reason of such acts of defendant, plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer damages."

Matabang asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to order Flores to pay him P600,000 in actual damages; P200,000 in moral damages; P200,000 in exemplary damages; P50,000 in lawyer's fees; and P50,000 in cost and litigation expenses.

More environment-friendly end for video karera machines in QC

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE QUEZON CITY POLICE DISTRICT (QCPD) "symbolically" destroyed yesterday some 30 video karera (VK) machines at the grandstand of its headquarters in Camp Karingal, Quezon City.

The police organization then let the QC Environmental Protection and Waste Disposal (EPWD) unit to dispose of the machines in a more environment-friendly manner for a fee.

The approach is a first for any police district in Metro Manila. Usually, VK machines are smashed using axes or crowbars.

Video karera machines look like slot machines. A person can bet as low as P1 on an electronic horse and win all the coins inside the machine. The machines are illegal because minors are able to play the games.

QCPD Director Sr. Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula destroyed about five machines, then let the EPWD to take the other units which will be destroyed at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority grounds in Zambales.

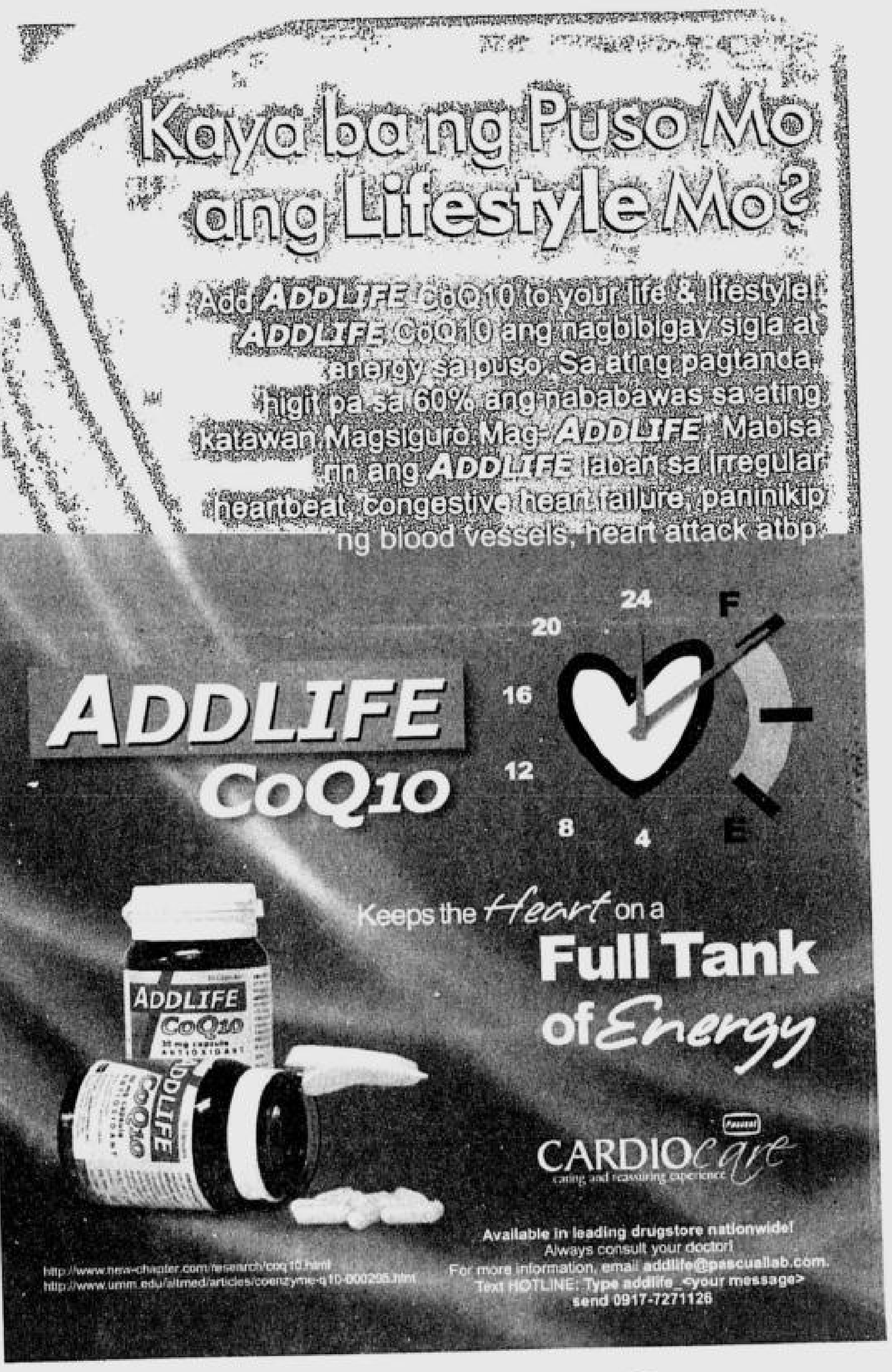
QCPD spokesperson Supt. Asprinio Cabula told the INQUIRER they had to pay P100 for every unit the EPWD took.

Cabula said the materials used in manufacturing the machines were "hazardous." "The monitors (screens) of the VK are reportedly made of materials that could adversely affect the environment," he said.

The VK machines, the spokesperson said, were confiscated in several barangays but no suspected illegal machine operators were arrested. The suspects were identified only as "Boyet Africa," "Nick," "Ely," and "Eva," who reportedly operated in Barangay Pasong Tamo in Pingkian, and Barangays Salvacion and Manresa, both in La Loma.

Cabula maintained that when the raids were conducted, there were no persons in the places were the VK machines were found.

Gatdula said the destruction of the machines was a "manifestation of the police district's and the local government's united effort against the operation of the illegal game."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Dasma embassies asked to relocate visa offices

By DJ Yap

VISA-ISSUING OFFICES OF 14 EMBASSIES were asked to move out of Dasmariñas Village in Makati City by homeowners who said their presence was not "suitable" to the upscale residential community.

Village association officers gave the embassies a year from July to relocate their consular services.

In a letter to Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, Dasmariñas Village chair Ma. Encarnacion Legaspi said the request was in keeping with village restrictions that "lots shall be used for residential purposes" only.

Residential sections of the embassies, including those of China, India, Russia, Iraq and Iran, may remain in the subdivision, Legaspi said in her letter sent July 18. Other embassies in the subdivision are those of Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Nigeria, Qatar, Romania, Sri Lanka, and Turkey.

Legaspi said the decision was made after a series of letters and meetings between the Dasmariñas Village Association (DVA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs from 1997 to 2007.

On July 16, a "breakthrough meeting" was again held between the DFA, headed by Assistant Secretary Jerril Santos, and the DVA, led by its president, Backie Celdran.

Legaspi said the association was firm in its decision that the village should comply with Section 2 of the Deed of Restrictions.

"The Dasmariñas body requested the DFA to ask the visa-issuing sections of embassies to leave the village and lease spaces in a commercial area where they would be more accessible to the public," Legaspi said. She added, "It should be noted that Dasmariñas Village is the only village in the Philippines where there are visa-issuing embassies."

In January, the DVA required the embassies to submit an appointment list of all visa applicants and visitors but the embassies protested the policy. Although most of the embassies eventually followed the guideline, Kuwait, India and Mexico did not, resulting in visa applicants being refused entry.

In a meeting on July 6, Legaspi said she made it clear that "Dasmariñas Village is a residential community, and that it welcomed the embassies as residents of the village, but not as offices to issue visas.

"The DFA should remind the embassies to respect the Deed of Restrictions and Zoning Ordinance of Makati City," she added.

'Jurisdiction problem hampers Metro police drive vs crime'

By Nancy Carvajal

THE QUESTION OF JURISDICTION IS hindering police efforts to neutralize criminal elements.

The problem was underscored in a police study presented in a recent COMSTAT meeting at the National Capital Region Police Office attended by senior police officials of Metro Manila.

"Despite the continuous effort... the lack of specific personnel to go after a particular criminal group operating in areas shared by various units contributes to (the inability to) neutralize criminal elements," the analysis stated.

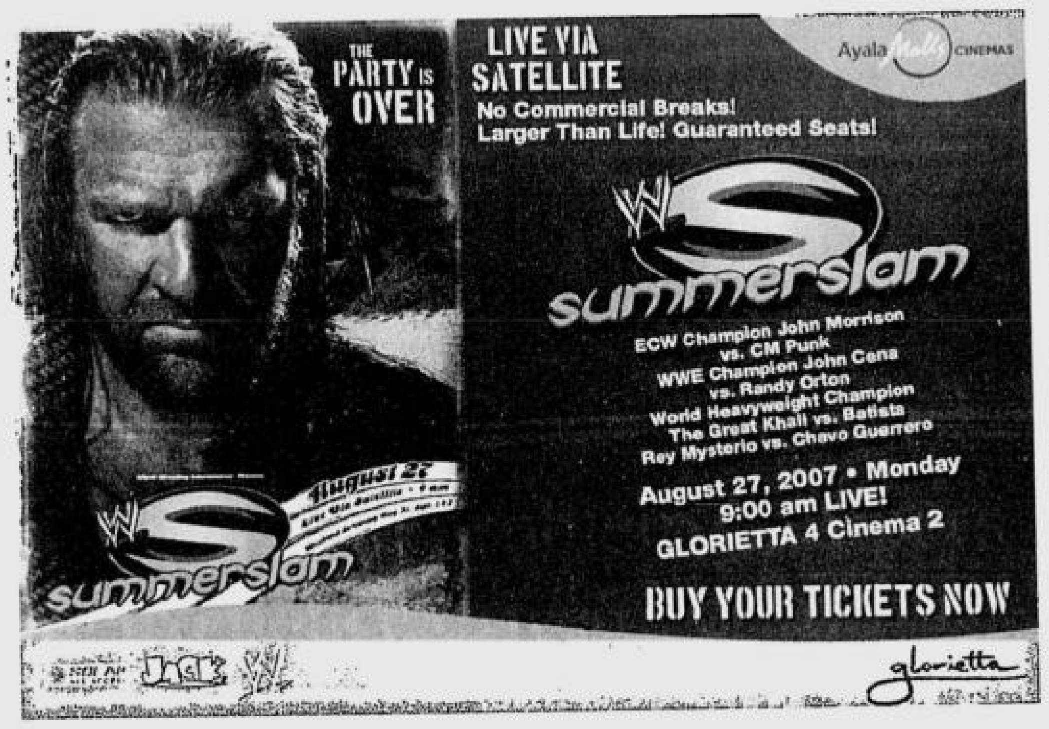
The confusion started, the analysis indicated, when a criminal group crossed boundaries.

Among the problem areas cited were those in the vicinity of common boundaries of police community precincts and substations. The confusion, it said, was particularly serious if police units shared jurisdiction over streets or avenues.

"Policemen usually think twice before responding or continuing their investigation," according to a senior police intelligence officer who requested not to be named.

He said jurisdiction played an important role not only in investigating suspects but most especially in pursuing the case in court.

"Evidence could be downplayed during the trial because of the law enforcer's lack of jurisdiction," the intelligence officer said.



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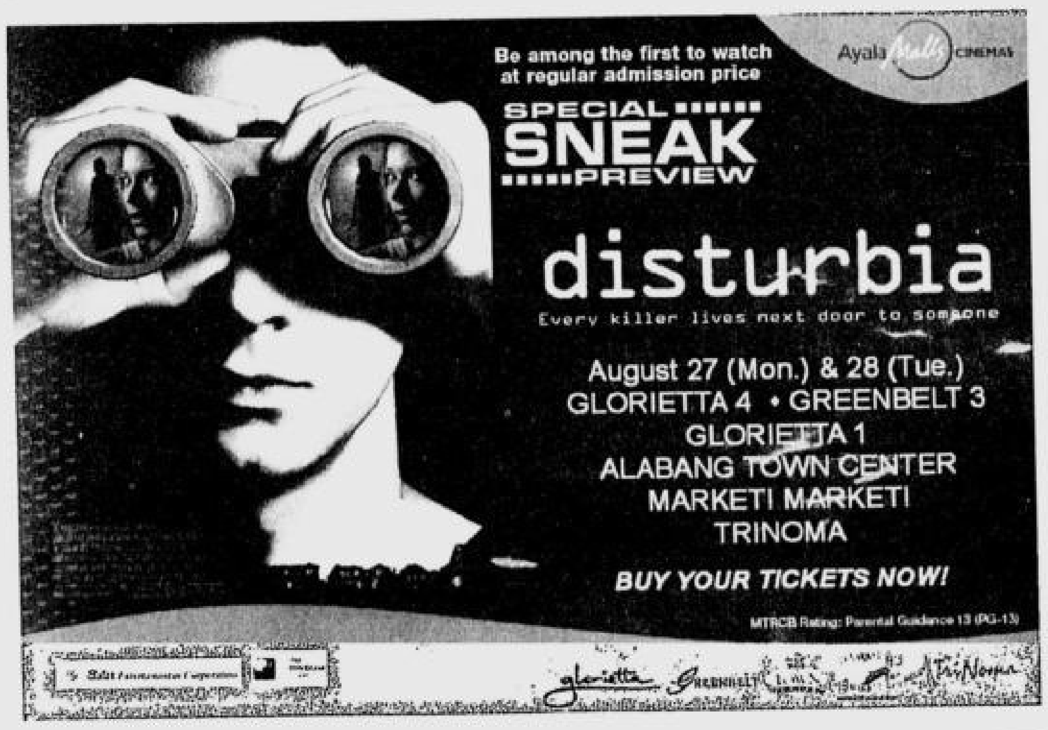

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Estrada visits ailing mother in San Juan hospital

By Kristine L. Alave

WORRIED OVER THE ILLNESS OF the family's grand old lady, Ejercito relatives, including former President Joseph Estrada, flocked to the bedside of Doña Mary Ejercito at the San Juan Medical Center where she had been confined for two weeks.

Flu and discomfort from back pain did not deter the deposed president from visiting his ailing 102-year-old mother at the hospital, where she had been under treatment since Aug. 10 for pneumonia and other complications.

The Sandiganbayan granted a one-day leave for Estrada, who arrived in the hospital from his villa in Tanay, Rizal, where he lives under house arrest, at around 11 a.m. The Sandiganbayan ordered Estrada to return to Tanay by 5 p.m.

Upon his arrival, the visibly worried Estrada declined to be interviewed and rushed inside the hospital.

Sources said other members of the Ejercito clan who went to visit Doña Mary were Dr. Pilarica Ejercito, Estrada's sister, and Estrada's wife former Sen. Loi Ejercito.

Estrada's son, San Juan City Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito, said his father was supposed to visit the Ejercito matriarch on Thursday but it did not push through as "he was not feeling well."

Estrada's physician, Dr. Lorenzo Hocson, said the president himself had been under the weather for the past two days, adding that Estrada complained of back pains and body malaise.

COMPLAINING of back pains, Estrada rests in a wheelchair after visiting his mother at the San Juan Medical Center. JOAN BONDOC

METROBRIEFS

2 firefighters hurt in Escolta blaze

TWO VOLUNTEER firefighters were injured as fire hit a building in Sta. Cruz, Manila yesterday afternoon. William Dahoklong and Troy Soriano suffered minor injuries as they were trying to help contain the fire. The blaze started at the fifth floor of the Prudential Bank Building on Escolta Street, Sta. Cruz around 4:20 p.m. The fire reportedly originated from the projection room of Leo Films, one of the building's lessees. *Tina G. Santos*

Araneta Beta Sigma marks 50th year

THE BETA Sigma Fraternity chapter of De La Salle-Araneta University is celebrating its 50th founding anniversary to culminate in a Grand Fraternity Ball on Aug. 27 at Club Filipino's Kalayaan Hall in San Juan. Contact DLS-AU-BSF Alumni President Dr. Jo Ramos at 0917-5247168 for inquiries.

Ella Elligo; 52

ELLA Luz Elligo died on Aug. 23 at the National Kidney Institute. She is survived by her father Bienvenido, brothers and sisters-in-law Benjamin and Melrose, Bienvenido Jr and Rosalie, and Baudillo and Nancy. Her body lies in state at the Divine Mercy Viewing Chapel, National Road, Tunasan, Muntinlupa City. Cremation will take place at 11 a.m. tomorrow, at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City.

President Gloria's dining companions

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THERE ARE ALLEGEDLY 90 GRAFT cases filed against officials who are presidential appointees at the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC), and yet only two officials have been fired so far by Malacañang. *(Malacañang said yesterday only 30-35 cases are pending in the office of the President.–Ed)*

The two dismissed officials are Victoriano Calaycay, National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) chair; and Dominador Ferrer Jr., chief of the Intramuros Administration.

You will note that the two officials didn't belong to government revenue-generating offices, like the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), and the Duty Free Philippines.

If you don't get what I'm driving at, then you must have been born yesterday.

* * *

The Calaycay and Ferrer cases involved petty sums—Calaycay for allegedly demanding P400,000 from a recruitment agency, and Ferrer for an unliquidated P2.2-million cash advance for the eviction of illegal settlers.

Those amounts are peanuts compared to the big bribes some Cabinet members and corrupt customs and BIR officials and employees allegedly receive in one month.

There are customs, BIR officials and employees—and even a Duty Free official—being investigated by the PAGC, but their case documents are gathering dust at the antigraft agency.

* * *

A front-page photo in the INQUIRER yesterday showed President Gloria making a speech before soldiers in Basilan in front of a table full of seafood and rice.

One of those in the background was a Muslim woman who was not identified. She is Gov. Jum Akbar, one of the wives of Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar, himself a former governor.

The President was ill-advised having Akbar with her since the congressman is very unpopular with the troops, especially the Marines.

Akbar's men were pointed to as allegedly responsible for the beheading of dead Marines who were ambushed by Moro rebels while looking for kidnapped Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi.

Bossi has since been released.

News reports about the President's trip to Basilan said she dined with Wahab Akbar, among others. The least her military advisers could have done was to keep their Commander in Chief away from Akbar.

If you ask an ordinary soldier in Basilan how he reacted to Akbar's presence in their camp, he would tell you: a) the President has decided Akbar is innocent, or b) she condones the action of his men.

* * *

The ghost of the past, "Hello Garci" scandal, is haunting President Gloria again. It's a dead issue that her detractors refuse to bury.

Because of the Hello Garci controversy, GMA has become the most hated Chief Executive, next only to Ferdinand Marcos.

Senate President Manuel Villar is right: she has become a lameduck President.

* * *

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon says the Abu Sayyaf will be annihilated in two months, or at least will become a negligible force.

The public has heard that line many times before. And yet, the Abu Sayyaf is still with us. The military should stop making promises it cannot fulfill.

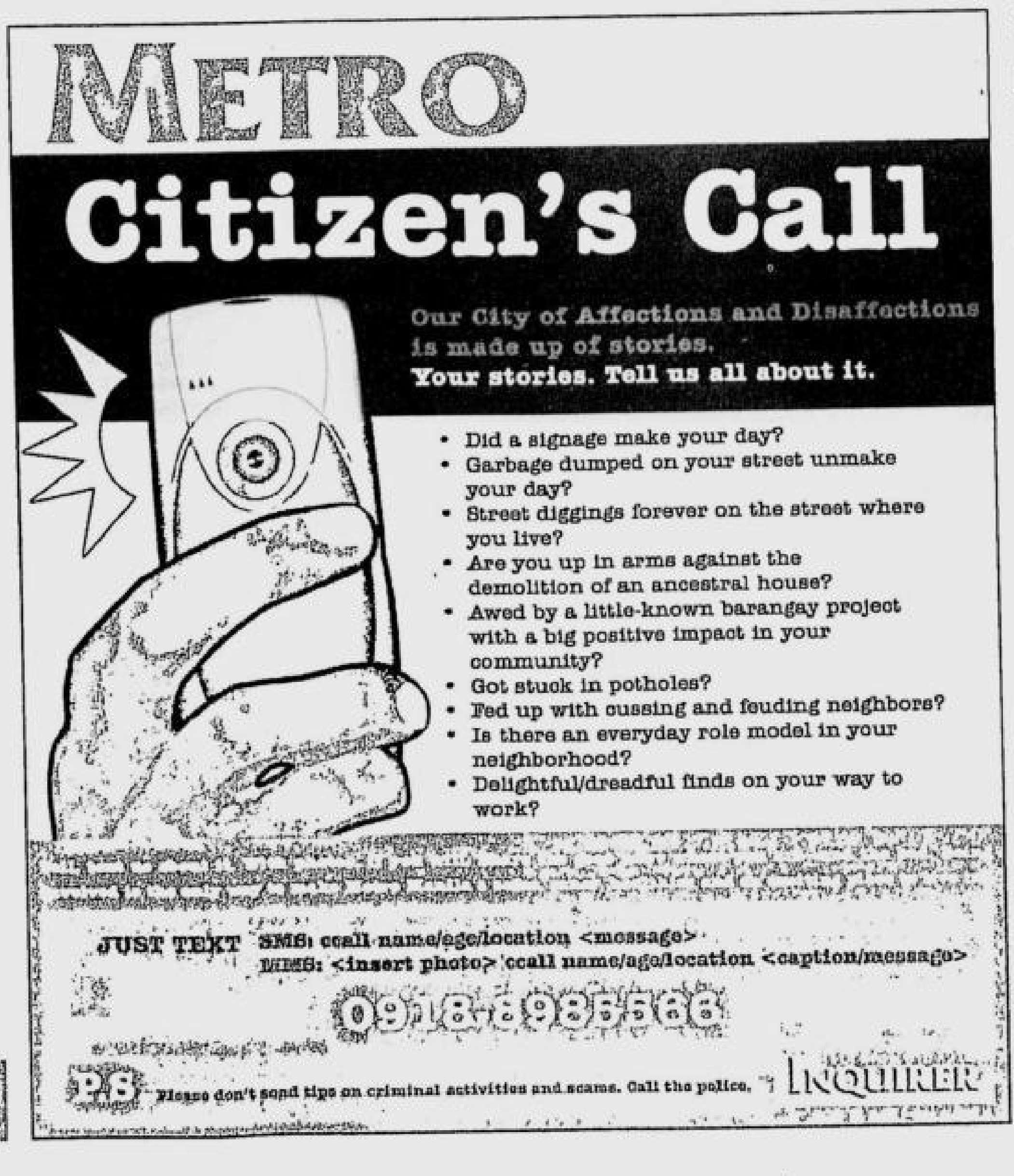
* * *

While the tenacity of Sen. Bong Revilla, chair of the Senate public works committee, in going after DPWH National Capital Region Director Josefino Rigor is admirable, I doubt if his action will accomplish anything.

Revilla has linked Rigor to alleged irregularities in multimillion-peso infrastructure projects in Metro Manila.

Rigor's alleged mismanagement has resulted in the delay in the repair of Tullahan Bridge at the MacArthur Highway in Valenzuela that's causing big traffic jams daily.

Rigor has reportedly been boasting that he is close to the President and cannot be removed from office.



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Your stories. Tell us all about it.
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Garbage dumped on your street unmake your day?
Street diggings forever on the street where you live?
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Awed by a little-known barangay project with a big positive impact in your community?
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Is there an everyday role model in your neighborhood?
Delightful/dreadful finds on your way to work?
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Please don't send tips on criminal activities and scams. Call the police.
INQUIRER

Explosives found in Pasay home

By DJ Yap

TWO IMPROVISED explosive devices were recovered in a Pasay City apartment and disarmed by the bomb squad yesterday, although the police downplayed the danger they posed.

"This is not a terrorist threat. It's a simple domestic dispute," said Senior Supt. Marieto Valerio, the city's chief of police, quashing fears that terrorist insurgents from the South had moved to Metro Manila.

Initial police reports indicated that the explosive devices were found inside an apartment on Apelo Street in front of the Iglesia ni Cristo church in Barangay 162, Zone 18, Malibay.

Ousted PM can return to Pakistan, court rules

ISLAMABAD—PAKISTAN'S SUPreme Court ruled Thursday that former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif can return from exile, dealing what the ex-premier said was a crushing blow to his arch foe President Pervez Musharraf.

Sharif vowed to come back soon to stand in upcoming elections and lead the growing opposition to military ruler and key US ally Musharraf, who overthrew the industrialist-turned-politician in October 1999.

Hundreds of Sharif's supporters danced jubilantly and sacrificed goats outside the court after the verdict was announced, chanting "Go Musharraf, go!" "Musharraf is a dog!" and "Long live Nawaz Sharif."

"They have an inalienable right to return and remain in the country as citizens of Pakistan," Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry said in his judgment, referring to the former leader and his brother Shahbaz Sharif.

The Sharifs went into exile in Saudi Arabia in 2000, a year after Musharraf ousted the premier and had him sentenced to life in prison on hijacking, tax evasion and treason charges.

The verdict piles further pressure on Musharraf, who earlier this month ruled out imposing a state of emergency in Pakistan despite political turmoil and a wave of Islamist violence.

"It is a defeat for tyranny and a day of jubilation for the people of Pakistan," Sharif told a local television station from London, where he and his brother are staying.

Sharif said he wanted to return "as soon as possible" and that he would call a meeting of his conservative Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party and other allies.

But the government warned that Sharif—who served as prime minister from 1990 to 1993, and again from 1997 to 1999—and his brother would face criminal charges if they were to return.

"They can of course come to Pakistan, but when they land the law will take its course," government lawyer Ahmed Raza Kasuri said.

A government spokesperson quoted by the official Associated Press of Pakistan said the court's decision would be "taken in its true spirit and action will be taken accordingly."

Both Sharif and another former prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, the leader of the rival Pakistan People's Party, have said they intend to contest forthcoming general elections due by early 2008.

Musharraf also intends to be reelected as president-in-uniform in September or October, in defiance of the constitution which says he should hang up his uniform by the end of the year.

Musharraf said in a state television show recorded before the verdict and shown later that he could not ignore Pakistan's opposition parties, including Sharif's, but said the country's voters would decide.

"I cannot disqualify them (Sharif and Bhutto). It is the people of Pakistan who can do that," he said.

The United States, which has ramped up pressure on key antiterror ally Musharraf to crack down on al-Qaida militants, reacted cautiously to the verdict by saying only that it wanted a moderate, democratic Pakistan. *AFP*

SHARIF REUTERS

Research links obesity and infertility

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIAN REsearchers have found a fatty diet damages eggs in the ovaries and prevents them from becoming healthy embryos, a finding they say may explain why obese women are often infertile.

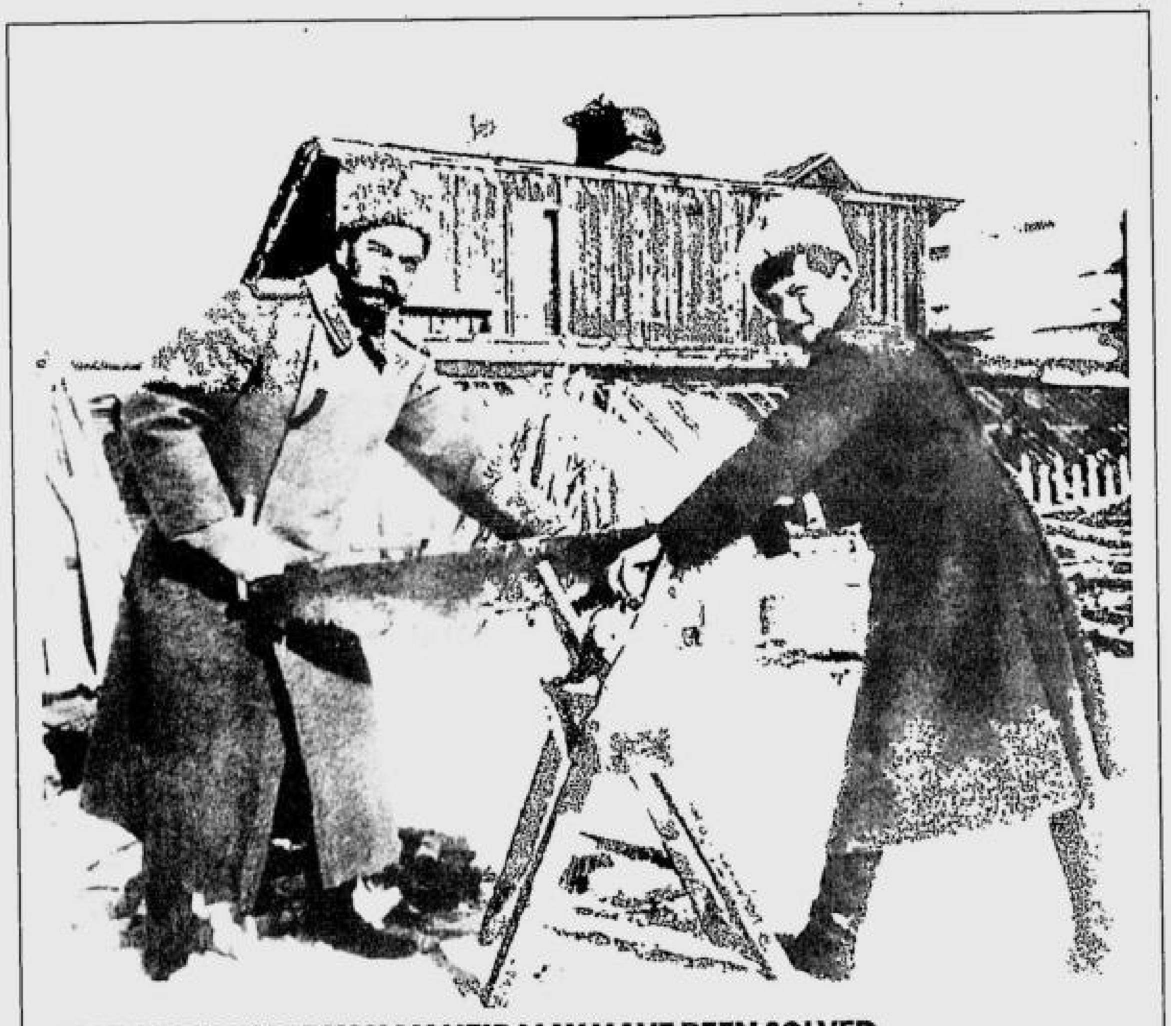
While obesity has long been suspected of hampering a woman's ability to conceive, the University of Adelaide research is said to be the first to find a direct scientific link.

Researcher Cadence Minge said experiments on female mice showed that fat has an impact on the egg before it is even fertilized.

"Consuming a diet of high fat causes damage to eggs stored in female ovaries," Minge said. "As a result, when fertilized, these eggs are not able to undergo normal, healthy development into embryos."

Minge said a protein called peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma found in the cells that nourish the egg was the main reason for diet-induced infertility.

"The behavior of this protein helps to determine the way in which the ovaries sense and respond to fats," she said. *AFP*



CASE OF MISSING RUSSIAN HEIR MAY HAVE BEEN SOLVED

Russian Czar Nicholas II (left) and his son Prince Alexei are shown sawing wood to heat their dwelling in Siberia, where they were held during the Russian Revolution in this undated photo. The remains of the last czar's son and heir to the Russian throne, missing since the royal family was gunned down nine decades ago by Bolsheviks in a basement room, may have been found, an archaeologist said Aug. 23. If confirmed, the finding would solve a persistent mystery and fill in a missing chapter in the story of the doomed family. AP

Boy's killing puts guns on top of British agenda

LONDON—TWO TEENAGERS have been arrested after an 11-year-old boy was shot dead in the latest in a series of violent youth deaths that has forced inner-city gun crime in Britain up the political agenda.

Rhys Jones was playing football in a pub car park in Liverpool on Wednesday night when he was shot by a hooded youth riding a BMX bicycle, Merseyside Police said.

Police had questioned two youths, aged 18 and 14, who were later released on bail, as Prime Minister Gordon Brown condemned "a heinous crime that has shocked the whole of the country."

Since taking over from Tony Blair on June 27, Brown has said he will be tough on law and order amid a string of high-profile cases of young people shot dead, often in deprived urban areas.

At least six teenagers have been killed in shootings in London since February, while the northern city of Manchester has also seen a string of gun attacks involving young people.

While gun crime represents less than half a percent of all recorded offenses in Britain, official figures show that the number of crimes involving firearms has been increasing since Blair came to power in 1997.

And the number of young people prosecuted over firearms offenses has jumped 20 percent between 2001 and 2005 to 1,444.

Blair's government brought in a series of measures designed to toughen up on gun crime, including introducing a minimum five-year sentence for people convicted of possessing an illegal firearm.

Brown, who hosted a pre-arranged summit on youth disorder and gangs at his Downing Street office Thursday, said he was determined to stick to the same path.

"Where there is a need for new laws we will pass them, where there is a need for tougher enforcement we will make sure that happens," he told reporters afterward.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith has just outlined plans to sign up thousands of families to anti-social behavior contracts—voluntary agreements aimed at tackling low-level crime—in an effort to nip violence in the bud.

On Wednesday, the leader of the main opposition Conservatives, David Cameron, said he wanted to tackle what he described as "anarchy in parts of the UK" by banning young offenders from holding or applying for a driving license. *AFP*

Gunman who shot US Governor Wallace to be freed

ATLANTA—ARTHUR BREMER, THE GUNman who tried to kill Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama as he campaigned for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1972, will be released from prison this year, a Maryland prison official said Thursday.

In 1973, Bremer was sentenced to serve 53 years for shooting Wallace and wounding three others at a campaign stop in Laurel, Md.

The bullet that lodged in Wallace's spine paralyzed his legs, and he used a wheelchair until his death in 1998.

Bremer has served 35 years of his original sentence, and managed, through credits for good behavior and steady job performance as a prison clerk, to earn an earlier release date, said Ruth A. Ogle, a program manager at the Maryland Parole Commission.

"The computer says he has never had an infraction," Ogle said. "Arthur apparently figured out how to stay out of trouble."

Bremer is scheduled to be released from the Maryland Correctional Institute in Hagerstown on Dec. 16, but he may be out sooner as he continues to cut time off his sentence.

He will continue to be supervised by the Maryland Parole Commission until 2025, the maximum expiration of his sentence, and a special condition of his parole will be that he stays away from political figures and events.

"He can't be around political candidates or any elected official," Ogle said. "He can't go to a rally, a public appearance, a political dinner, anything like that." *NYT*

WORLDBRIEFS

Sudan expels Western diplomats

KHARTOUM—Sudan has expelled European and Canadian diplomats for "interfering in its affairs," a move that could further strain relations with the West. The White House reacted to Sudan's announcement on Friday saying it hoped it was not an attempt to sidetrack international efforts to end the conflict in Darfur, which Washington has termed genocidal. "Sudan has summoned the envoy of the European Commission and the Canadian charge d'affaires and informed them they were considered persona non grata because they interfered in Sudanese affairs," Sudanese foreign ministry spokesperson Ali al-Sadek told the official SUNA news agency. The exact reasons for their expulsion were not immediately clear. Canada demanded an explanation from Khartoum. *AFP*

Two teachers jailed after Bangladesh riots

DHAKA—Bangladesh security forces on Friday arrested two professors from Dhaka University who were active in the protests that erupted into clashes with police this week, a school official said. The arrests came in raids early Friday before the government said it was temporarily suspending a curfew imposed after three days of unrest in the country, which has been under emergency rule since January. Harun ur Rashid, dean of the university's social science faculty, and Anwar Hossain, dean of bioscience and general secretary of the university's teachers' association, were arrested, acting vice chancellor Yusuf Haider said. *AFP*

Floods, heat wave batter US; 50 dead

CHICAGO—Unrelenting storms and floods have forced thousands of people from their homes, while other US states have wilted in a record-breaking heat wave with the death toll from the extreme weather hitting the country rising to almost 50 Thursday. Mudslides and murky floodwaters hampered rescue efforts in the central and southern states of Minnesota, Oklahoma, Texas, Ohio, Iowa and Wisconsin after a week of heavy rains that has left 23 dead. In Wisconsin three people, including a toddler, were the latest victims, after they were electrocuted and died on Wednesday when lightning struck a utility pole and knocked a live wire into a deep puddle at a bus stop. Forty people were injured in Chicago Thursday when a roof collapsed in the midst of a violent thunderstorm that uprooted trees and knocked out power lines, police said. Meanwhile, soaring temperatures in the southeastern states of Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama have been blamed for the deaths at least 25 people in recent weeks. *AFP*

Walkman powered by carbo diet

TOKYO — BREAD and potatoes are sources of human energy, and now a carbohydrate diet is also powering up a Walkman.

Japanese technological giant Sony Corp., hoping to be ecofriendly, said it developed a prototype battery cell that generates electricity from carbohydrates and sugar.

The test cells have achieved output of 50 milliwatts, enough to play music on a Walkman, Sony said.

In a demonstration on Thursday, a Sony employee poured a sugary sports drink to power a music player and speakers.

The company said it came up with the battery by studying how living creatures generate energy.

Sugar batteries would biodegrade and the source material can be found in plants grown around the world. *AFP*

MANSMITH AND FIELDERS, INC.
September 2007 Course Offerings
21ST KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT
CREATING LONG-TERM COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
(BY EMILIO MACASAET III)
SEPT. 5-6, 2007 (8:30 A.M. TO 5:30 P.M), MANDARIN ORIENTAL HOTEL, MAKATI CITY

More and more companies are embarking on key accounts management to build highly profitable partnering relationships with customers. However, for lack of effective strategy framework, most attempts can't seem to take-off beyond the traditional vendor-customer relationships.

This intensive 2-day seminar teaches participants how to invent new ways of creating strategic alliances with their key accounts that will bring unprecedented gains in profit and competitiveness. Case studies, current best practices, and workshops that direct participants to conduct active adult learning activities on their own follow each topic to enhance the learning process.

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JOSIAH GO'S 69TH MARKETING STRATEGY AND PLANS SEPT. 19-20, 2007
21ST BUILDING A WINNING SALES TEAM (BY EMILIO MACASAET III) SEPT. 19-20, 2007
5TH NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES AND SECRETS (BY ROWEN UNTIVERO) SEPT. 25-26, 2007

For complete 2007 schedule of seminars, course outlines, fees, group discounts and other inquiries, please visit our website at www.mansmith.net, email info@mansmith.net, text 0918-81-168-88 or call Alice Torres at telefax nos. (02) 722-2318 / 727-7142.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US intel doubts viability of Iraq strategy

WASHINGTON—A STARK ASSESSMENT RELEASED Thursday by the nation's intelligence agencies depicts a paralyzed Iraqi government unable to take advantage of the security gains achieved by the thousands of extra US troops dispatched to the country this year.

The assessment, known as a National Intelligence Estimate, casts strong doubts on the viability of the Bush administration strategy in Iraq. It gives a dim prognosis on the likelihood that Iraqi politicians can heal deep sectarian rifts before next spring, when US military commanders have said that a crunch on available troops will require a reduction in the US presence in Iraq.

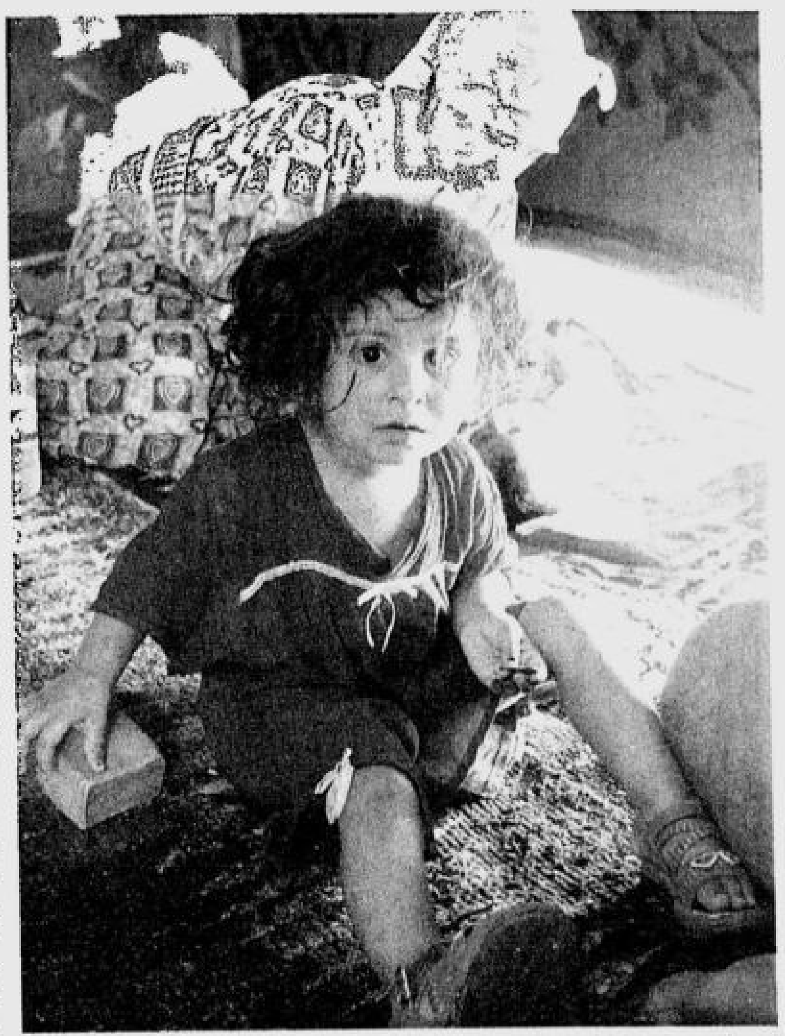
But the report also implicitly criticizes proposals offered by Democrats who have called for a withdrawal of US combat troops from Iraq by next year and for a major shift in the US approach, from manpower-intensive counterinsurgency operations to lower-profile efforts aimed at supporting Iraqi troops and carrying out quick-strike counterterrorism raids.

Such a shift, the report said, would "erode security gains achieved thus far" and could return Iraq to a downward spiral of sectarian violence.

The report is the most prominent and authoritative assessment to date of what the administration has called a surge strategy.

The report, which represents the consensus view of America's 16 intelligence agencies, suggested that policymakers face a dilemma. While the current strategy in Iraq has produced "measurable but uneven improvements" in security, it said, the approach has done little to bridge sectarian divides in Iraq. The report also said that pulling US troops out of Iraq would most likely make things far worse.

A leading Republican, Sen. John Warner of Virginia, on Thursday called for President Bush to take the first steps toward a limited drawdown of troops, of perhaps 5,000 soldiers by the end of year, as a way to send the Iraqi government a message that "we mean business" in saying the US commitment in Iraq is not open-ended. *New York Times*



AN ARAB family at a refugee camp in Sulaimaniyah, 330 km north of Baghdad, July 7. Rich and poor, educated and illiterate, Arabs are fleeing the killing fields of Iraq to settle among and take the charity of Kurds so brutally repressed by the former regime. AFP

Number of displaced Iraqis on rise since start of surge

BAGHDAD—THE NUMBER OF Iraqis fleeing their homes has soared since the US troop increase began in February, according to data from humanitarian groups, accelerating the partition of the country into sectarian enclaves.

Despite some evidence that the so-called troop surge has improved security in certain areas, sectarian violence continues and US-led military operations have brought new fighting, driving fearful Iraqis from their homes at much higher rates than before the tens of thousands of additional troops arrived, the studies show.

The data track what are known as internally displaced Iraqis—those who have been driven from their neighborhoods and seek refuge elsewhere in the country rather than fleeing across the border. The effect of this vast migration is to drain religiously mixed areas in the center of the country, sending Shiite refugees toward the overwhelmingly Shiite areas to the south and Sunnis toward majority Sunni regions to the west and north.

Though most displaced Iraqis say they would like to return, there is little prospect of their doing so.

Statistics collected by one of the two humanitarian groups, the Iraqi Red Crescent Organization, indicate that the total number of internally displaced Iraqis has more than doubled, from 499,000 to 1.1 million, since the start of the surge in February.

Those figures are broadly consistent with data compiled independently by an office within the United Nations that specializes in tracking wide-scale dislocations. That office, called the International Organization for Migration, found that in recent months the rate of displacement within Baghdad itself, where the surge is focused, has increased by as much as a factor of 20, although part of that rise could stem from improved monitoring of displaced Iraqis by the government in the capital. *New York Times*

Role of telecom firms in US domestic eavesdropping confirmed

WASHINGTON—THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION has confirmed for the first time that American telecommunications companies played a crucial role in the National Security Agency's domestic eavesdropping program after asserting for more than a year that any role played by the companies was a "state secret."

The acknowledgement came in an unusual interview that Mike McConnell, the director of national intelligence, conducted with The El Paso Times last week in which he revealed details on classified intelligence issues that the administration has long insisted would harm national security if discussed publicly.

He made the remarks in an apparent effort to bolster support for the broadened wiretapping authority approved by Congress this month, even as Democrats are threatening to rework the legislation because they say it gives the executive branch too much power.

It is vital, McConnell said, for Congress to give retroactive legal immunity to the companies that assisted in the NSA eavesdropping program to help prevent them from facing bankruptcy because of lawsuits over the program. *NYT*

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
SURE CONNECT INC. 14/F Vernida IV Bldg., 128 LP Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Andrew James Davies	Technical Consultant
PHILIPPINE CHINESE EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER, INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Qinghua Huang	Mandarin Language Teacher
PHILIPPINE CHINESE EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER, INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Jing Dong	Mandarin Language Teacher
PHILIPPINE CHINESE EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER, INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Fuyu Wei	Mandarin Language Teacher
PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL, INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Limei Zhang	Mandarin Language Teacher
IN THE GRADE SCHOOL, INC. 647 P. Paterno St., Quiapo, Manila	David M. Larkin	Consultant
JOEUN TRAVEL TOURS & CONSULTANCY INC. Unit 201 Amaremca Bldg., 107 Kalayaan Ave., Quezon City	Hosang Lim	President
MOF COMPANY, INC 2232 CTC Bldg., Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Jeonga Hwang	Korean Executive Liaison Officer
LG 25 FOODSTORE, INC. 26 Timog Ave., cor. Sct. Tobias, Quezon City	Kyunghee Kim (w/o KIM)	Supervisor
ZTE PHILIPPINES, INC. 25/F Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Guixian Xu	Account Manager
EASY KITCHEN SONAMOO MART U-101B Centerpoint Bldg., Garnet Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yangbeen Kim	General Manager
EASY KITCHEN SONAMOO MART U-101B Centerpoint Bldg., Garnet Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Seung Yun Song (w/o Shin)	Operation Manager
HANS GOURMET SERVICES, INC. 08 C. Raymundo Ave., Rosario, Pasig City	Christopher Anthony Leaning	Executive Chef
LIYIMEN SEAFOOD RESTAURANT CORPORATION 835 Banawe St., Brgy. St. Peter, Quezon City	Yok Ho Ng	Finance Manager
SANGAM & COMPANY 3509 Buenos Aires St., Sampaloc, Manila	Gurjit Kaur	Marketing Manager
NEUNGYULE EDUPHONE, INC. 9/F IBM Plaza Bldg., Eastwood City, Bagumbayan, Quezon City	Harold Earle	English Instructor Representative
XEPESYS INC. East Side, 20/F Pacific Center Bldg., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Seok Kyu Jang	Korean Supervisor
PHILIPPINE CHINESE EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER, INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Liangfu Yao	Mandarin Language

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI–August 25, 2007)

SOUTH COTABATO II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(SOCOTECO II)

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II) is inviting all interested bidders to Pre-qualify and to Bid for the following:

1. **KWH METER – 2,000 SETS**
   SPECIFICATIONS:
   240 VOLTS, 1-70-S, GLASS COVER, WITH SOCKET BASE
   4 JAWS (LONG), CL 100, 2 WIRES
   BRAND NEW, GE BRAND
   WITH ERC SEAL AND METER TEST RESULT
   SOCKET BASE PRODUCT OF JOCELYN FORGE INC. (JFI)
2. **CONDUCTOR BARE WIRE # 1/0 ACSR – 60,000 MTRS IN REEL**
3. **CONDUCTOR BARE WIRE # 6 ACSR – 60,000 MTRS IN BUNDLE**

To be qualified, Bidder must have fully complied with the following:

Accreditation Requirements
- A. Company Profile
- B. Business Registration
- C. BIR/VAT Certificate of Registration
- D. Business Permit
- E. Latest Income Tax Return (ITR)
- F. List of Clients for a period of three (3) years

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Bid and Award Chairperson – VIRGILIO B. OCTAVIO

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF REQUIREMENTS – SEPTEMBER 15, 2007.

(Sgd.) **VIRGILIO B. OCTAVIO**
BAC Chairperson

Noted by:
(Sgd.) **Engr. RODOLFO G. OCAT**
General Manager

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(PDI–August 25 & 26, 2007)

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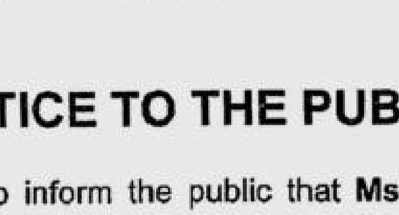
WELCOME
ARTHUR N. AGUILAR

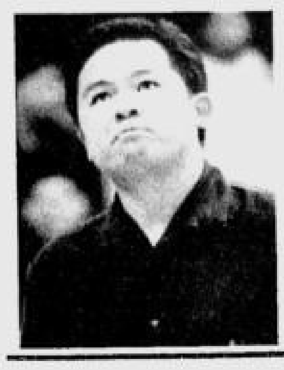
TRANSCO SELLS P230-M SUB-TRANSMISSION ASSETS TO MERALCO.
The National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) recently signed a P230-million contract with the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) for the sale of the former's sub-transmission assets in Bulacan, Cavite and Laguna. Signing for TransCo and Meralco were their presidents Arthur Aguilar and Jesus Francisco respectively. The divestment of sub-transmission assets to qualified distribution utilities is part of TransCo's efforts to pursue power sector reforms as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001.



NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that **Ms. Annalyn Migo**, whose picture appears above, is no longer connected with **Berkley International Plans, Inc. (BIP)** and any transaction entered into by above-mentioned individual will not be honored by BIP nor by any of its subsidiaries or affiliates.

(PDI -August 25, 2007)



WHAT'S INSIDE

Chot on hold; Siot stays on as SMB coach /A22

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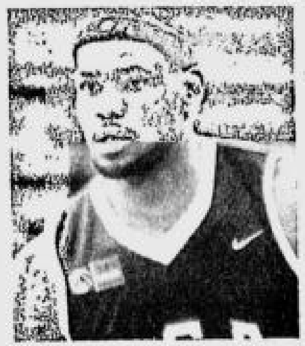
US five pops Virgin Islands /A23



Knights nip Stags, barge into Final 4

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FOR LETRAN, EVERY FREE THROW COUNTS.

Foiling the San Sebastian Stags' fouling tactics with deadly accuracy from the charity stripe in the homestretch last night, the Knights prevailed, 67-63, and claimed the second semifinal berth in the NCAA basketball competition at The Arena in San Juan.

John Melegrito and Alvyn Cabonce hit five charities between them in the final minute to secure the Knights' eighth victory in 10 games.

However, Letran still needs another win to avail of the twice-to-beat bonus already enjoyed by league-leader and first semifinalist San Beda.

Though the Stags took their sixth loss against four wins, they can still make the Final Four with victories in their last two assignments—against Jose Rizal and also-ran Perpetual Help.

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	9	1
Letran	8	2
Jose Rizal	6	4
Mapua	6	6
S Sebastian	4	6
Perpetual	3	7
St. Benilde	1	11

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(*The Arena, San Juan*)
2 p.m.—San Beda vs Perpetual (Srs)
4 p.m.—Jose Rizal vs San Sebastian (Srs)

The Stags ended the third quarter with a 42-37 lead, but the Knights tightened up on defense and showed unusual sharpness from the line.

Earlier, Michael Kong fired 17 points as Perpetual Help added to St. Benilde's misery with a 66-52 win.

The Altas, though, are no longer in the running for the Final Four with just three wins to show in 10 games. The Blazers took their 11th loss in 12 outings.

In juniors action, defending champion San Sebastian bested Letran, 70-64, and St. Benilde beat Perpetual Help, 72-65. The Staglets improved to 7-2, while handing the Squires' second loss in nine games. The Junior Blazers upped their record to 3-6, while the Altalettes fell to 1-8.

The varsity scores:

Third Game

PERPETUAL HELP 66—Kong 17, Manuel 13, Dysam 13, Balboa 6, Lee 5, Salanga 4, Reyes 4, Ynion 2, Liaz 2, Mejos 0, Galabin 0, Febrian 0.

ST. BENILDE 52—D. Urra 10, M. Urra 9, Porras 8, Robles 8, Johnston 4, Manlapaz 3, Montecastro 3, Sevilla 3, Layug 2, David 2, Cadiz 0.

Quarters: 9-12, 28-23, 50-40, 66-52

Fourth Game

LETRAN 67—Jazul 23, Faundo 18, Melegrito 7, Dangcal 5, Cabonce 5, Daa 4, Quinday 3, Guevarra 2, Gutilban 0, Ranises 0, Del Rosario 0, Foronda 0.

SAN SEBASTIAN 63—Viray 21, Raymundo 16, De Leon 10, Zulueta 9, Ballesteros 3, Aquino 3, Najorda 1, Del Rio 0, Bulawan 0, Delgado 0, Quiamco 0.

Quarters: 18-16, 32-28, 37-42, 67-63

FRANCIS de Leon of San Sebastian (right) blocks a shot by Alvyn Cabonce of Letran in yesterday's game.
AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Mancom: NCAA cage season won't be scrapped

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BASKETBALL MATCHES IN THE COUNTRY'S oldest collegiate league will go on as scheduled and aborting the 2007 season is out of the question.

This was the gist of a statement released by the NCAA's management committee yesterday on the controversy surrounding the eligibility of San Beda standout Yousif Aljamal.

League officials, on advice of their lawyers, withheld further comment on Aljamal—whose ban from the league the Mancom had recommended—and San Beda's vehement protests.

The league yesterday presented its position to the Manila Regional Trial Court which, on San Beda's request, had earlier imposed a temporary restraining order on the NCAA plan to ban Aljamal from the Red Lions' remaining matches.

The Mancom said Aljamal failed to formally inform the league of his intention to apply for the PBA Rookie Draft, thus breaching a league rule.

San Beda officials said there is no specific rule requiring NCAA players to seek the league's permission in applying for the PBA draft.

"Since [the case] is with the court already, we cannot talk about it," said the Mancom statement. "The NCAA hopes San Beda will do

MANCOM/ A22

8th win almost a cinch for Archers today

STANDINGS	W	L
UE	10	0
La Salle	7	3
FEU	5	4
UST	5	4
Ateneo	4	4
NU	4	5
Adamson	1	8
UP	0	8

GAMES TODAY
(*Ninoy Aquino Stadium*)
2 p.m.—UP vs La Salle (Srs)
4 p.m.—FEU vs Ateneo

AFTER A THREE-GAME SKID COMES REdemption three times over.

La Salle is expected to notch its third straight win—and eighth overall—today and solidly ensconce itself in second place when it takes on winless University of the Philippines in the 70th UAAP men's basketball competition at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Far Eastern University targets solo third place against Ateneo at 4 p.m.

After absorbing a third consecutive loss at the hands of the defending champion University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers on Aug. 11, the Green Archers went on to beat the Tamaraws, 74-66, and the Adamson Falcons, 75-55, just two days ago.

A win over the Maroons would hand the Archers an 8-3 slate, and even if the Tamaraws get past the Eagles for a 6-4 card, coach Franz Pumaren's boys would still enjoy a one-and-a half-game advantage.

Joe Lipa's squad were blown off the court by the Archers, 82-61, in the first round.

"I think each game will be a test on our part," Pumaren said. "We can say that at this stage, our destiny to make it to the Final Four is in our hands." *Romina S. Austria*

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RP golfers trail as rains halt Johor tilt

JOHOR BHARU, Malaysia—Australia's Unho Park and Jason Knutzon of the United States enjoyed a two-stroke cushion for the clubhouse lead at the weather-disrupted Iskandar Johor Open on Friday.

Filipino Gerald Rosales nursed a 1-under card after 12 holes and stood at the forefront of the Filipinos' campaign at the Royal Johore Country Club.

With his opening 70, Rosales is within sight of Park and Knutzon who were tied at four-under 138 following a 69 and 67, respectively.

Artemio Murakami, who shot a first round 70, was at an even par 36 after the front nine while Jerome Delariarte, who made a first round 71, was one over after the 15th hole.

Recovering from an opening 72, Mars Pucay was also even par going out.

Among those who finished the round were Filipinos Tony Lascuna, Angelo Que and Juvic Pagunsan.

Lascuna carded a 71 for a 143 total, Angelo Que tallied a 75 for 146 and Pagunsan another 73 for 146.

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RP chessers boost Malaysian Open bid

Standings after 7 rounds:
5.5 points—GM Zhang Zhong (China), WGM Ruofan Li (China), Weiqi Zhou (China), Li Chao (China), IM Wang Rui (China), Wan Yunguo (China), GM Ziaur Rahman (Bangladesh); 5.0—**IM Oliver Dimakiling (RP), IM Richard Bitoon (RP), IM Barlo Nadera (RP), NM Emmanuel Senador (RP)**, GM Dao Thien Hai (Vietnam), IM Grinath P.D.S. (India)

FILIPINO NATIONAL MASTER EMMANUEL Senador beat Indonesian Aman Kairul in the seventh round yesterday to stay in contention in the 2007 Dato Artur Tan Malaysian Open at the Cititel Midvalley Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

Senador, a member of the Philippine team to the 2004 Mallorca Chess Olympiad, raised his total to 5.0 points and shared seventh to 10th places with compatriots International Masters Oliver Dimakiling, Richard Bitoon and Barlo Nadera and Indian IM P.D.S. Grinath.

Dimakiling drew with Nadera while Bitoon split the point with Vietnamese Grandmaster Dao Thien Hai. Grinath bested Vietnamese Fide Master Ton That Nhu Tung.

Bangladeshi GM Ziaur Rahman downed Indon IM Sadikin Irwanto to share top spot with Chinese GM Zhong Zhang, Woman GM Li Ruofan, Zhou Weiqi, Li Chao, IM Wang Rui and Wan Yunguo.

Rahman and the Chinese stalwarts were at 5.5 points in the 86-player, 11-round event.

The top-seeded Zhang split the point with Zhou, Li drew with Li, Wang beat IM Gary Lane of Australia and Wan handed Filipino FM Hamed Nouri his second straight defeat.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Ucaa caging gets going

DEFENDING CHAMPION EMILIO Aguinaldo College Generals try to prove there is life after Ronjay Buenafe as the 6th Universities and Colleges Athletic Association basketball tournament begins today at The Arena in San Juan.

EAC coach Normar Isla, eyeing a fourth straight title, is optimistic his players will step up in their game against Asian College of Science and Technology at 10 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi tackles Olivarez College in the main match at 2:30 p.m.

Philippine School of Business Administration collides at 11:30 a.m. with newcomer Universal College of Nursing before La Salle-Dasmariñas meets another rookie team, Las Piñas College, at 1 p.m.

PBA chair Tony Chua and OIC Sonny Barrios are the guests in the 9 a.m. opening rites.

Chot on hold; Siot stays on as SMB coach

By Musong R. Castillo

CHOT REYES' RETURN TO THE PHILIPpine Basketball Association is still on hold—at least for one conference.

Siot Tanquingcen will continue calling the shots for San Miguel Beer when the Beermen try to improve on a second place finish in the Philippine Cup, which opens the league's 33rd Season on Oct. 14 at the Araneta Coliseum.

"That's what I know," Reyes, who coached the National team to a ninth place finish in the Fiba-Asia tilt in Japan, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "I will sit it out for one conference, take a break and see what happens."

Reyes, who doesn't have a live contract, continues to receive his salary every month from San Miguel, though.

Tanquingcen, the youthful tactician who took over San Miguel after three straight losses to open last season's Fiesta Cup, has continued to be the one in charge of the team even after Reyes returned from Japan.

"Right now, this is his (Tanquingcen's) team," team manager Hector Calma told the INQUIRER over the phone. "What the team is doing right now is his system, his philosophy. Everything is being run by him."

San Miguel Corp. owns three teams in the PBA—the Beermen, Barangay Ginebra under Jong Uichico and Purefoods, which is being handled by Ryan Gregorio.

Meanwhile, player-agent Edgar Tan, who handles contract negotiations of rookies Joe Devance and Ken Bono, yesterday apologized to the INQUIRER for feeding the paper with the wrong information on Bono's situation with Alaska.

Tan had told this reporter on Thursday night that Alaska was sitting on the tender offer it was supposed to give Bono within a five-day period after being drafted last Sunday.

Bono, apparently had already received and signed an offer from the Aces' management.

"No one knew about it, [not] even his wife," Tan said over the phone yesterday after learning that his ward, selected sixth overall by the Aces, had signed the tender offer right on Draft Day at the Market! Market!

Tan accompanied Devance, the No. 1 overall Draft pick, yesterday when the 6-foot-7 Fil-Am signed a three-year deal worth the maximum allowable amount with Welcoat.

Ryan Arana, the 12th pick overall, also signed a similar three-year deal worth close to P6 million. Arana, according to coach Leo Austria, will be converted into a point guard to address the Dragons' playmaking needs.

CHOT REYES: I will sit it out for one conference, take a break and see what happens.
PDI PHOTO/ROMY HOMILLADA

Batawang unshaken by fight postponement

By Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—FILIPINO BERT BATAWANG REmained firm when told here yesterday that his Sept. 16 world title bid has been called off after IBF light flyweight champion Ulises Solis of Mexico suffered a shoulder injury.

It was the second time in two weeks that Batawang's big fight had been cancelled, but the gritty fighter from Cebu took it gracefully and said he was leaving everything to his manager.

He said he would resume training at the Wild Card gym here where he sustained a cut over the eyebrow during a sparring session on Wednesday.

The 35-year-old father of six who fights out of the ALA Gym in Cebu has been away for nearly three months and said his kids cry as one whenever he called home.

He was originally set to fight as part of the victorious RP team that dethroned Mexico in the Boxing World Cup in Sacramento on Aug. 10, but his scheduled opponent was pulled out at the last minute after being detected with a torn retina.

"His manager, Sammy Gello-ani, said Batawang will be booked for a fight in the US while waiting for Solis to get well," INQUIRER correspondent Salven Lagumbay reported from Cebu yesterday.

Rodel Mayol, Batawang's sparmate who has been training here for a projected appearance in the Oct. 6 Manny Pacquiao-Marco Antonio Barrera rematch in Las Vegas, said Solis, who stopped him in Chicago on Aug. 4, could have used an alibi because the champ had very little time to train for the Batawang bout.

Mayol gave credit to Batawang's punching power, saying the 18-year pro from Cebu stood a good chance of beating Solis.

"*Basta ako po trabaho lang* (I'll just keep working hard)," Batawang told the INQUIRER.

Although he had expressed disappointment after he was pulled out of the World Cup card, Batawang said he was paid $3,500 together with a percentage from television proceeds by Golden Boy Promotions.

Mayol said all he got from his $35,000 purse in the Solis title fight was $8,000 following deductions imposed by his business manager Michael Koncz.

STI bounces back; Hawks down Titans

By Marc Anthony Reyes

STI BOUNCED BACK FROM A STINGING loss with an 85-62 rout of St. Clare yesterday to fortify its hold of the lead in the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) basketball tournament at the New Era gym.

Upset by Centro Escolar, 65-64, at the start of the second round, the Olympians (10-1) vented their ire on the Saints, settling the issue after only three quarters by taking a 69-49 lead.

Howard Flor and Ramon Mabayo paced STI's attack that drove the Saints deep down in the standings at 5-6.

In other games, San Sebastian-Cavite turned back defending champion AMA, 84-78, while University of Manila blasted CEU, 69-59.

The Bay Cats, who had a spectacular season last year only to forfeit many of their victories due to technicalities, rose to 7-4.

The Titans slumped to 8-3 behind the second-running 9-2 card of the Hawks, holders of the longest winning streak in collegiate caging history at 76 games.

The scores:

First Game

STI 85—Flor 13, Mabayo 13, Micutuan 11, Balneg 9, Cabangon 8, Juan 7, Tiongco 7, Dimas 6, Legaspi 6, Porto 2, Bartolo 2, Mendoza 1, Tolentino 0, Reyes 0.

ST. CLARE 62—Geraldino 13, Lodia Cruz 9, Manlo 8, Opalla 7, Laurel 4, Diswe 3, Labatos 3, Valenzona 2, Perobigan 0.

Quarters: 22-23, 50-34, 69-49, 85-62

Second Game

SSC-C 84—Bolocon 23, Canita 20, Gracilla 14, Alcasabas 9, Villareal 6, Lucernas 6, Basa 3, Echavez 3, Filio 0.

AMACU 78—Zablan 24, Vergara 21, Galang 8, Jaime 7, Abao 6, Bernardo 6, Mollena 2, Garcia 2, Masigan 2, Alfaro 0, Donasco 0.

Quarters: 21-15, 43-31, 59-50, 84-78

FUTURE STARS
Cagers from San Beda and Ateneo de Manila strut their wares during a recent match in the Milo-Best Center SBP-Passerelle Metro Manila tournament. Aspiring cagers from Mindanao's top schools pit skills starting Sept. 8 in Bukidnon and Cagayan de Oro City and from Sept. 9 in Zamboanga. The Milo-sponsored tournament in Davao is ongoing. The top teams at the end of the provincial legs will move on to the regional finals. The national finals kick off Dec. 2 in Zamboanga City.

Feati five pulls rug from under MLQU

FEATI UNIVERSITY HUMbled defending champion Manuel L. Quezon University, 100-93, recently to jumpstart its campaign in the 13th Colleges and Universities Sports Association basketball tournament at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Israel dela Cruz topscored with 30 points and combined with Marvin Agacer as Feati overcame a seven-point deficit late in the game.

MLQU was led by Jopher Custodio who shot 33 points.

Central Colleges of the Philippines also won its first assignment, sneaking past Trinity University, 81-77, in the second game of the eight-team, double-round tournament.

The scores:

First Game

FEATI 100—De la Cruz 30, Agacer 21, Relova 16, Leonido 10, Gonzlaes 8, Primo 6, Bituin 4, Gatchalian 3, Tuano 2, Ebria 0.

MLQU 93—Custodio 33, Dizon 16, Tamayo 13, Tadlas 9, Patricio 6, Vitug 5, Sumayang 5, Crisostom 3, Manasala 3, Vera 0.

Quarters: 25-24, 49-50, 71-75, 100-93

Second Game

CCP 81—Sonza 16, Lising 16, Carreon 13, De Guzman 9, Corpuz 8, Pangilinan 7, Meneses 4, Mustre 2, Lopez 2, Henares 2, Benabese 2.

TRINITY 77—Medrana 21, Susi 15, Emerta 12, Pasco 11, Magadia 6, Faundo 6, Espa 3, Laroco 2, Pantanosas 1, Toriblo 0, Oliver 0, Castillo 0, Borgonia 0.

Quarters: 18-14, 35-28, 60-46, 81-77

NCAA cage season won't be scrapped

From page A21

the same."

The Mancom met with the league's higher body, the Policy Board, yesterday where they discussed the TRO that prevented the league from implementing the action on Aljamal.

San Beda is expected to seek an extension of the TRO which expires at noon today.

Sources in the Mancom Thursday night revealed that they were looking at several possibilities to end the stalemate, including abandoning the season altogether.

The Mancom, however, denied yesterday that it was considering scrapping the basketball tournament.

"While the court proceedings are taking place, the games will continue," the Mancom statement said. "Besides, we never entertained the thought of aborting the season."

Aljamal was drafted by Air21, which later shipped him to Talk 'N Text.

On the strength of the 72-hour TRO, Aljamal played and powered San Beda past Jose Rizal University, 82-74, last Wednesday, giving the pacesetting Red Lions their ninth win against a single defeat.

SPORTSWATCH

Millionaire joins Asia Pacific Poker Tour; P25M at stake

AUSTRALIAN JOE HACHEM, WHO pocketed $7.5 million when he won the 2005 World Series of Poker championship, is among more than 200 players from 30 countries competing in the first Asia-Pacific Poker Tour which began yesterday at the Hyatt Hotel and Casino.

Former world champions Daniel Negreanu, Joe Hachem and the Philippines winningest poker player, Wally "The Dream" Sombero, are likewise competing for a share of the $500,000 prize pool in the three-day event.

Last Thursday, Negreanu led some 100 local and foreign bets in the Celebrity Challenge where Nick Gallan won over celebrities like Paolo Araneta, Miko Palanca and billiards player Alex Pagulayan to earn a slot in the APPT eliminations.

Gallan topped the preliminaries at table 11, where he beat Negreanu in a heads up.

"There has been a massive explosion in poker over the last 10 years," said organizer Sarne Lightman.

"Poker used to be associated with shady men in smoke filled rooms but that's not the case any more. Poker is a skills based sport based on mathematics and psychology," added Lightman.

Fast Cars & Stars up

TUASON RACING SCHOOL AND FORD Focus Turbo Diesel is staging the 2nd TRS Ford Focus Celebrity and Media Cup dubbed "Fast Cars & Stars" today at The Fort Open Grounds.

At stake in the event is a chance to win an all-expense paid trip to the World Rally Championship race in Europe.

Invited participants will battle it out in two identical rally tracks at The Fort Open Grounds, beside Bonifacio High Street on board the new Ford Focus Turbo Diesel.

The public is invited to witness the event, test drive the cars and get a chance to win exciting prizes.

The special rally track will be open to the public tomorrow, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

LPC stagfest finals today

THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND OF LAS Piñas 7-stag derby fires off at 1 p.m. today at Las Piñas Coliseum.

Twelve participants posted three wins each on Thursday's opening round. A among them are Gerry Ramos and the Primallion brothers, who paraded the improved version of the Zamboanga Blacks, and Gen Gen Arayata, co-champion in last year's National Bakbakan 9-stag derby who fielded the one-punch Rat Graves dom (bulik).

For details, call 873-1040, 0927-7101671 or 0926 -7450375 (Rudy or Julius).

Bates derby Monday

BIG-TIME STAGFIGHTING SHIFTS TO the Makati Coliseum as the highly awaited Richard L. Bates 7-stag derby unfolds on Monday and Wednesday.

Twelve more participants have signed up yesterday, led by 2005 NCA Stagfighter of the Year Boy Jiao, Eddie Araneta, Super Pacman group, Eric dela Rosa, Ramon Mancenares, Benjie Lim, Mike Romulo, Efren Canlas, Allan Que, John Capinpin,Celso Evangelista, Osang dela Cruz and Ram Lopez.

The first round of elimination starts at 2 p.m. on Monday with more than 80 fights lined up.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Bad Boy (2), Getting Better (3), Wind Power/Think Tank (6), Royal King (4)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Iloranai (3), Virgin Hill/Davehill Dave (6), BMI Baby (5), Friendly Fire/Classy Pages (4)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Just Superb (7), Decent Proposal (6), Sper Elegent (5), Touchmenot (4)

Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Musashi (5), Northstorm (2), Just Like Nit (4), Red Gown (1), Rogue Knight (9)

Race 5—(Tri)—Personal File (2), Ahnone (4), So Gorgeous (5)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Red Hot Water (3), Raise A Dancer (1), Raven (6), Golden Rhythm (7), Native Prince (8)

Race 7—(Tri)—Heroics/Imminent Star (3), Dancing Polly (1), Chariot of Fire (5)

Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Mary Jane Bomb (3), Gelay's Charm (6), Kawiliwili (4), Morning Nell (7), Smooth Strike (8)

Race 9—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Batong Silyar (8), Kai Jason (6), Luck of The Irish (9), Kim Possible (10), Hok Kee Kok (12)

Race 10—(Qrt/Tri)—Silent Operator (7), Ingay Ingay (5), Chicklet (2), Just A Moment (6)

Race 11—(Qrt/Tri)—Through The Fire (3), Golden Africa (5), Star Colony (2), Petro Dollar (6)

Race 12—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Yao Man (10), Speed Bullet (5), Ideal Gaze (4), Words of Joy (7), Leica N'Raven (2)

Race 13—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Lord Gold (1), Sellmade (10), Truly Impressive (12), King View (4), Golden Lance (8), Holy King (6)

Federer, Nadal headed for championship duel anew

NEW YORK—SILLY AS IT SOUNDS nowadays, there was a time when some in the tennis world wondered whether Roger Federer was equipped to handle the US Open.

Even Federer himself harbored doubts. It took him longer, after all, to get past the fourth round at this Grand Slam tournament than any other.

"Hey, New York is a crazy place," he said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "There's the night. There's the humidity. There's the heat. There's the city. There's the wind. If you can win the US Open, you can win anything."

Federer, of course, overcame all of those factors to take the past three championships at Flushing Meadows, part of his haul of 11 Grand Slam titles—three shy of Pete Sampras' record. When play begins on Monday at the year's last major, Federer will be trying to become the first man since Bill Tilden in the 1920s to win the American Slam four times in a row.

Worst record

Now it's another top player's turn to prove he can deal with all of the challenges the US Open presents: Rafael Nadal. His career record of 8-4 in New York is his worst at any major.

Last year, the Spaniard reached the Open's quarterfinals for the first time, yet here was his assessment then: "I cannot say I am very happy with my tournament.

"I want to play the final in every tournament," Nadal said. "I know that's impossible, but I'm going to try, no?"

After No. 1 vs. No. 2 showdowns at the French Open and Wimbledon, Federer and Nadal can become the first pair of men to contest three consecutive Grand Slam finals since Ken Rosewall and Fred Stolle in 1964-65.

There is a lot more parity in the women's game, with five players splitting up the past five majors. Four—No. 1 Justine Henin, No. 2 Maria Sharapova, Serena Williams and Venus Williams—already have won the US Open at least once and are the top contenders this year, although each has had recent injuries. The fifth, Amelie Mauresmo, withdrew because of health concerns.

Two other players, both from Serbia, appear on the verge of a first major title: Jelena Jankovic and Ana Ivanovic.

Wild cards

As is often the case, the true wild cards are the Williams sisters. Serena Williams, whose eighth major title came at January's Australian Open, hasn't played in 1½ months because of a thumb injury. Venus Williams won Grand Slam No. 6 at Wimbledon, then entered only one tournament since and lost in the quarterfinals.

Still, other players know they have to watch out for the Williams family.

Here's what defending US Open champion Sharapova said about Venus: "I know what she's capable of. I know she can produce great tennis. That's what has won her so many Grand Slams, kept her at the top."

Mainly because of a lack of activity, the sisters have seen their rankings fall from those heady times when they were meeting in Grand Slam final after Grand Slam final—the way a couple of guys have been doing lately.

Nadal beat Federer twice for the title on clay at Roland Garros. Federer beat Nadal twice for the title on grass at the All England Club.

Riveting rivalry

So the hard courts of the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center could provide a tiebreaker of sorts in what's become a riveting rivalry.

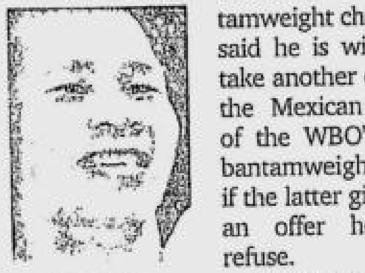
Their five-set epic at the All England Club in July is the type of match that hooks fans.

"Great athletes define a sport, but great rivalries lift a sport to unprecedented levels. You've got a great character, like a Muhammad Ali—that defines a sport. But introduce a Foreman or a Frazier, and that lifts that sport to a whole new level," said the head of the ATP, Etienne de Villiers. *AP*

Peñalosa to Ponce: Name the right price

GERRY PEÑALOSA HAS BEEN TOLD TO steer clear of Daniel Ponce de Leon by a man whose advice he has followed throughout most of his career.

He is willing to play it deaf, though, if the price is right.



PEÑALOSA

The newly-minted World Boxing Organization bantamweight champion said he is willing to take another crack at the Mexican holder of the WBO's super bantamweight crown if the latter gives him an offer he can't refuse.

"Around $350,000 dollars," Peñalosa told reporters in Filipino during the Scoop sa Kamayan Forum yesterday. "I already have a belt, so my purse should be a lot higher this time."

The last time the two fighters clashed in March, Ponce De Leon scored a 12-round unanimous decision. Peñalosa was paid $60,000 then to challenge the hard-hitting Mexican, who recently brought Boom Boom Bautista down in just one round during the World Cup of Boxing.

Peñalosa bounced back from that loss, knocking out Jhonny Gonzales during that same World Cup to annex his latest world title.

Sportsman Rudy Salud, who handled Peñalosa's career in the past, has told the Cebuano to stay away from Ponce de Leon in the meantime.

"But then, it would be hard to heed that advice now if the prize money is large," said a grinning Peñalosa.

Besides, rather than answer Gonzales' call for a rematch, Peñalosa would like another shot at Ponce de Leon.

US 5 pops Virgin Islands

Scola fuels Argentina triumph

LAS VEGAS—LUIS SCOLA, one of the few Argentina stars playing in the Americas championship, scored 16 points to help the defending Olympic gold medalists beat Uruguay 90-69 on Thursday.

Also, the United States trounced the US Virgin Islands, 123-59, Puerto Rico routed Panama, 108-67, and Canada beat Venezuela, 80-73.

Pablo Prigioni led Argentina with 20 points, while Roman Gonzalez added 15 and keyed a strong defensive effort against Uruguay center Esteban Batista, who managed only seven points on 3-of-10 shooting.

KOBE Bryant of the US goes for a drive against the US Virgin Islands. AP

Playing its tournament opener, Argentina led by only seven at halftime. But Uruguay, which beat Panama 88-84 on Wednesday in overtime, faded in the second half.

Argentina won gold in 2004, but is trying to qualify for Beijing without the core of that team. Manu Ginobili and Fabricio Oberto, starters for the NBA champion San Antonio Spurs, plus the Chicago Bulls' Andres Nocioni and Charlotte Hornets' Walter Herrmann all decided to take the summer off.

But the Argentines still have Scola, who after years of playing in Europe is headed to the Houston Rockets after they acquired his rights recently from the Spurs. He made 6 of 12 shots and added six rebounds, four assists and two steals.

Milwaukee Bucks point guard Michael Redd came off the bench with a flurry of 3-pointers to trigger an early rout as the United States downed the US Virgin Islands.

Redd and Carmelo Anthony each scored 22 points for the Americans (2-0), who put together a dominant stretch immediately after Kobe Bryant rode the bench with his second foul less than 4 minutes into the game.

Mike Miller and Amare Stoudemire added 13 points apiece for the Americans, who shot 15-of-30 from 3-point range and had all 12 players scoring.

The Americans are off Friday before closing pool play with games Saturday against Canada and Sunday against Brazil.

Kevin Sheppard scored 11 points for the Virgin Islands, whose best player can't play for them. Tim Duncan started playing internationally for the United States in 1996, and once that happened the St. Croix native became ineligible to play for his home team. But he also wouldn't play against them, sitting out the Americans' 113-55 victory while playing for them in the 2003 Olympic qualifying tournament.

Emilio Taboada scored 14 points and Fernando Martinez had 11 for Uruguay, which is also off Friday. Batista had nine rebounds after finishing with 26 points and 19 boards on Wednesday.

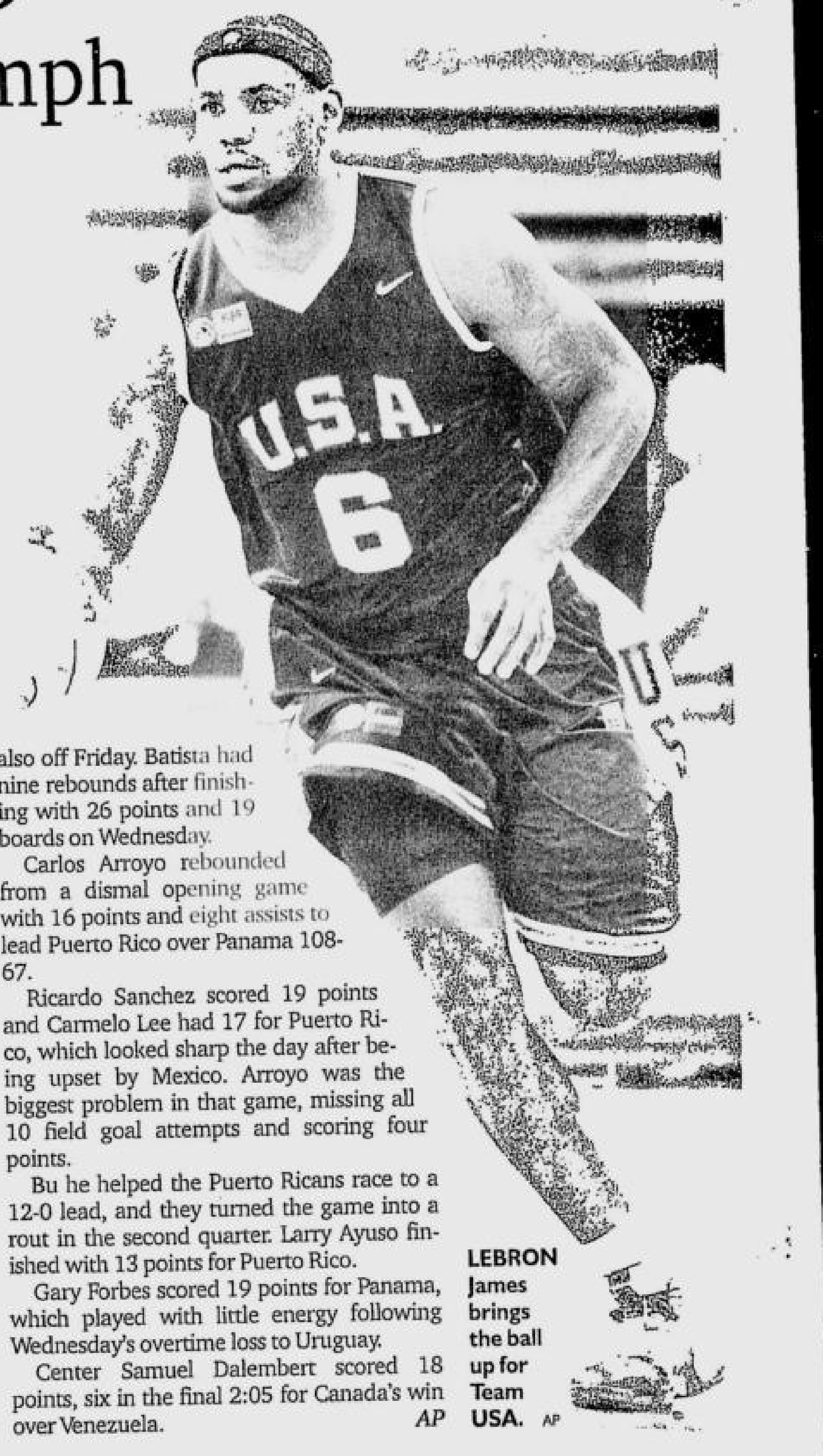
Carlos Arroyo rebounded from a dismal opening game with 16 points and eight assists to lead Puerto Rico over Panama 108-67.

Ricardo Sanchez scored 19 points and Carmelo Lee had 17 for Puerto Rico, which looked sharp the day after being upset by Mexico. Arroyo was the biggest problem in that game, missing all 10 field goal attempts and scoring four points.

Bu he helped the Puerto Ricans race to a 12-0 lead, and they turned the game into a rout in the second quarter. Larry Ayuso finished with 13 points for Puerto Rico.

Gary Forbes scored 19 points for Panama, which played with little energy following Wednesday's overtime loss to Uruguay.

Center Samuel Dalembert scored 18 points, six in the final 2:05 for Canada's win over Venezuela. *AP*



LEBRON James brings the ball up for Team USA. AP

Travel-weary Beckham gets hot under the collar

CARSON, CALIFORNIA—David Beckham, just off a flight from London earlier in the day, got feisty after being tackled from behind by Jesse Marsch of Chivas USA in the Los Angeles Galaxy's 3-0 loss Thursday.

Beckham played the entire 90 minutes for the third time in six days, and was limping slightly near the end of the game in which he served as captain for the third consecutive match.

Beckham was in the starting lineup about six hours after arriving on a flight from London. He had spent the last four days with the England team, including playing the entire game in Wednesday's 2-1 loss against Germany at Wembley Stadium.

He failed to connect on a couple of first-half free kicks, and near the end, as 5 a.m. London time approached, a tired Beckham had Carlos Pavon handle a corner kick.

Also returning from Europe were Galaxy forward Landon Donovan and defender Jonathan Bornstein of Chivas USA. They played for the United States in a 1-0 loss to Sweden on Wednesday.

Maykel Galindo scored twice in the second half, including his team-leading 10th goal of the season, for Chivas USA, winners of four of its last five.

An announced crowd of 27,000—camera flashes popping on Beckham's corner kicks—saw the Galaxy's $6.5 million dollar man show his temper for the first time.

Marsch came running up behind Beckham and applied a high kick to the Galaxy captain's upper right hip during injury time at the end of the first half of the Major League Soccer game.

Beckham fell forward, got up and ran over to Marsch, shouting in his face. A grim-faced Marsch stood his ground while Beckham was pulled away by teammate Edson Buddle. Beckham continued shouting at Marsch and swung his right arm when the referee tried to grab him and usher him away.

A shoving match ensued between the teams, which Beckham quickly backed out of and circled around. *AP*

Guioguio's 59 powers Del Monte to top

CEBU—LOVELYN GUIOGUIO CAME through with a fiery five-under-par 59 as Del Monte wrested a seven-point lead over Manila Southwoods in the Diamond division going into the final round of the WGAP Luzvimin Golf Invitational tournament at the Cebu Country Club course here.

Guiguio, an Ateneo Golf Foundation scholar, submitted one of the lowest scores in the annual event in recent years, seizing a nine-point cushion in individual play where she is seeking a third straight victory.

Eva Miñoza carded a 52 while Kristine Leonen and Marian Woo each made 48s for Del Monte's 205 aggregate, a 14-point improvement from their opening round score of 191.

Del Monte's 396 was seven in front of Southwoods which amassed 196 for the day.

Southwoods got its best score from Lora Roberto who made 53 as jungolfer Regan de Guzman could only submit a 49. The other two scorers were Beachie Abiera and Carmelette Villaroman who had similar 47s.

Kathleen Uy scored 55 points but her Cebu Country Club team fell 25 behind after a 191.

Negros kept a measly three-point margin over Sta. Elena (316-313) in the Ruby division while Alabang surged to a 23-point lead over Club Filipino (289-266) in the Pearl division.

Aside from Guioguio, the other individual leaders were Marissa Romano of Villamor in Class A, Carol Nielsen of Alabang in Class B and Apple Fudolin of Del Monte in Class C.

Brash Sabbatini leads PGA Tour playoffs

DUAL MEET VICTORS

Members of the victorious Kamayan Golf Club celebrate winning the Tito Eduque Cup with Vic Vic Villavicencio. The triumphant golfers include, from left, Virgil Villavicencio, Ting Coscolluela, Tony Cumagun, Philip Brodett, Luis Coscolluela, Jessie Martinez, Tony Wee, Art Cecilio and Bart Puzon.

HARRISON, NEW YORK—THE playoffs arrived on the US PGA Tour and delivered an ideal first-round leader in Rory Sabbatini, a brash South African who loves the idea of going head-to-head and is not afraid to speak highly of his chances no matter who's in his way.

Too bad Tiger Woods wasn't around at The Barclays on Thursday.

Sabbatini, whose best year in golf has been highlight by barbs and challenges directed at the world's No. 1 player, attacked a soft Westchester Country Club on his way to an 8-under 63 for a one-shot lead over Rich Beem and KJ Choi.

The Barclays is the first of four tournaments that comprise the PGA playoffs, a new concept aimed at rewarding those who play their best golf at the end of the year. About the only thing that resembled real playoffs was that some of the top players brought their top games.

Even though Sabbatini is known for saying Woods looked as "beatable as ever," he has tried to back up his words with strong play. A winner at Colonial, he came into these playoffs at No. 13 in the world and No. 6 in the playoff standings.

"I would say I'm getting close to getting to the top level," Sabbatini said. "I keep opening the door and keep slamming it on my foot every time I step through. It's just a matter of time before I break through and get to that top level. That's the way I look at it."

Choi is No. 5 in the playoff points, courtesy of his victories at Muirfield Village and Congressional. He also made eight birdies, offset by one bogey. *AP*

Tours Leisure Chow

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PALAISDAAN Restaurant turns 16

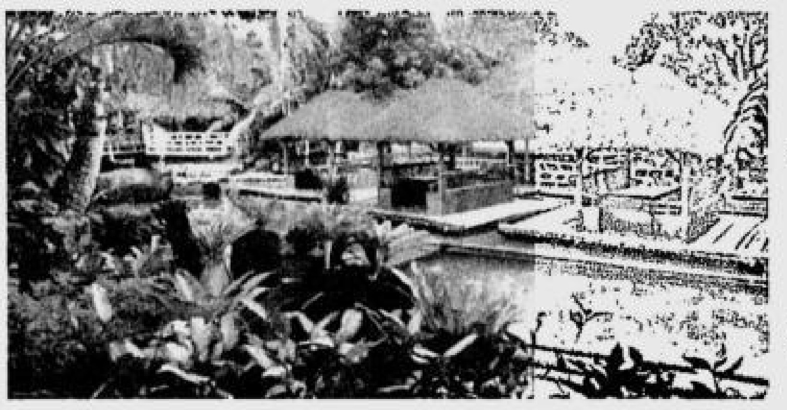
PALAISDAAN RESTAURANT, A COUNTRY dining restaurant located in Tayabas, Quezon is celebrating its sixteenth anniversary this September. From its modest beginning in 1991 in a small bamboo hut by the fishpond patiently tended by its founders Marianito and his wife Filomena de los Santos, it has now become one of the best country dining restaurants in Quezon and a tourism landmark in the city of Tayabas. It is approximately 136 kms. southeast of Manila and is located at the foot of the mystical Mt. Banahaw along the Tayabas - Lucban road (a declared tourism zone). Sitting in a 1.3 hectare - land of idyllic beauty (at 750 feet above sea level), Palaisdaan Restaurant is blessed with cool climate, bracing mountain breeze, lush vegetation and spring water that flows abundantly from Mt. Banahaw into its fishponds and waterfalls. It features 34 bamboo huts (24 of them floating), 4 pavilions, and other structures that are designed and built to complement the rustic ambiance of the restaurant.

But Palaisdaan's best attraction is still the food that is delicious and reasonably priced. With tilapia raised abundantly in the fishpond, fish dishes like grilled tilapia, sinugno (fish cooked in coconut milk) and ginataan are its specialties. Native delicacies like longganisa, budin and nilupak are also available. For an authentic feel of country life, these are eaten with bare hands. However, spoons and forks are available upon request.

Today, Palaisdaan Restaurant remains at the forefront of the tourism related industry in Tayabas, Quezon. Under the stewardship of Rene de los Santos, the youngest son of its founders, it is as bullish as ever. Mr de los Santos is continuing the good policies initiated by his parents while introducing some innovations of his own. Plans of renovations, expansions, upgrading of services are afoot to keep its competitive edge and to make Palaisdaan Restaurant truly the place to experience country dining at its best.

For enquiries and reservations, call (042) 793-3529 or visit www.mypalaisdaan.com.

D. Norman F. Ragudo



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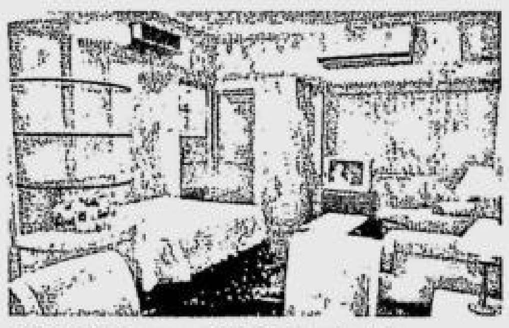
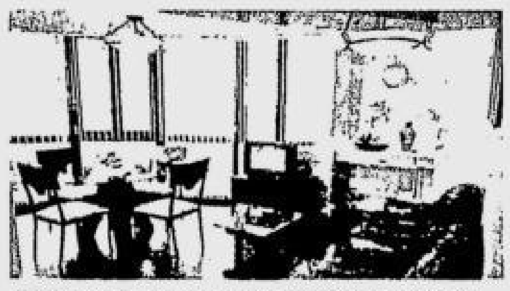
For inquiries and reservations, call (02) 632-1010 locals 264 and 272 or visit www.asbgroup.com.ph or directly book through e-mail at reservations.condotels@asbgroup.com.ph. ASB Condotels and Resort is a division of the St. Francis Square Group of Companies.



DELUXE room of ASB Condotels at Prince Plaza



THE two bedroom suite of ASB Condotels

The decadent colors of caviar at The Tivoli

A GRAND DINING EVENT unfolds in a sublime wine-pairing dinner featuring the "Colours of Caviar" at Mandarin Oriental, Manila's signature fine-dining restaurant The Tivoli, on Friday, Aug. 31 at 7 p.m.

Wine and gourmet enthusiasts will find a decadent treat in these irresistible caviar creations paired with splendid wines: Lime-cured barramundi sashimi and Ponzu-sake espuma with golden trout caviar paired with Estancia Pinot Grigio, 2005, USA; Creamy bouillabaisse served with Nori caviar and saffron ice cream; Crabmeat crusted sea scallop with seared tiger prawn and leek-white chocolate fondue served with pike caviar paired with Saint Hallett Poacher's Blend Semillion-Sauvignon Blanc, 2005, Australia; Lemon vodka refresher with Tobiko; Olive oil poached veal tenderloin on Wasabe linguini with Sevruga caviar and sea urchin-carrot cream paired with Voyager Estate Margaret River, Chenin Blanc, 2005, Australia; Mille-feuille of cottage cheese with chive, keta caviar and dried fig sauce with Tatachilla Mc Laren Vale Keystone Grenache Shiraz, 2002, Australia; capped with Ginger sabayon served with minted mango and biscotti with Ginger Martini.

Lilting piano music by Teresa Avila adds to the luxurious gastronomic experience. The gourmet wine-dinner is at P3,180+++ per person. Reservations are recommended. Call The Tivoli at 750-8888 extension 2431 to 2433.

Savor the taste of Asia at Café Astoria

FROM SEPT. 1 TO 30, SAVOR THE TASTE OF ASIA without leaving the luxurious confines of the hotel as East meets West with an exciting selections of soups, hot and cold dishes, entrees and sumptuous desserts that is a willingness to experiment with new ingredients and spices. Sample the Maki Roll Tempura, Mango Sesame Spring Rolls, Asian Ravioli and other exotic dishes known in the Far East. Guests will certainly take a gastronomic fusion of some of the Asia's most popular cuisine everyday of September. As in any truly great restaurant, there is a strong foundation in the kitchen. Café Astoria is open from 6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Asian spread is available throughout September from Monday to Friday at P480++ per person. Astoria Plaza is located at #15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City. For inquiries and reservations call 687-1111 or visit www.astoriaplaza.com. Astoria Plaza is managed with distinction by Genesis Hotels and Resorts Corp.

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THE BELLEVUE HOTEL'S FEATURED CAKE OF THE MONTH DESIRE CHEESECAKE IS NOTHING BUT pure bliss. Experience Desire as the duet of cheese and chocolate melts and recreates heaven in your mouth. Find everything that you are looking for at the Bellevue Hotel's Lobby Shop. Exquisite jewelry pieces, Asian-inspired accessories and lovely apparel are but a few of the treasures you're sure to find. The Lobby Shop is open from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. Experience elegance with a touch of class as The Bellevue Hotel offers a special rate just for the locals. For as low as P4,500++ a night, you get a complimentary buffet breakfast for two and a shuttle service going to nearby malls and business districts. Let loose and unwind with the free use of the gym facilities and swim to your hearts desire at the hotel's pool. But first things first, enjoy the complimentary fruit plate as you arrive then there's a welcome drink waiting for you at the 20/20 Bar. Meanwhile, have fun and bond with your family the Bellevue way! The premier luxury destination South of the Metro makes Sundays so much more special as Café d Asie adds tons of fun and excitement with every bite. Enjoy the sumptuous brunch buffet as the kids and kids at heart have fun at the indoor playground or go enjoy the different games available with the Xbox 360 and the Nintendo Wii. With Bellevue, family day will always be fun day! For inquiries, call 771-8181.

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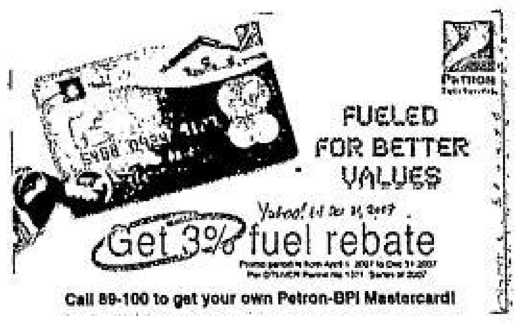
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RP imports grew 2.3% in 1st half

Rise in imports seen as sign that exports are getting stronger

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS ROSE 3.8 PERCENT FROM A year earlier to $4.71 billion in June in a possible sign that industries were bouncing back, the statistics office yesterday said.

Total imports in the first half reached $25.3 billion, a 2.3-percent increase over the same period last year, the National Statistics Office said.

Electronic products, largely used as components in the country's electronics exports, made up 46.5 percent of the June import bill, amounting to $2.188 billion. This was up 8.4 percent over the same period last year.

The import figures brought the June trade deficit to $589 million, 22.9 percent above the year-ago figure.

However, the trade deficit in the first six months of the year fell 44.7 percent to $776 million.

Analysts see the rise in imports as a sign that the country's exports are getting stronger after showing some softness earlier in the year.

In the two months prior to June, imports payments registered negative growth, the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) said in a statement.

Growth in imports for June was also powered by a strong demand for consumer goods, according to Neda officer-in-charge Augusto B. Santos.

RP IMPORTS/ B3

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc.'s freight station at Manila's North Harbor contain towering equipment that are used to transport cargo. Growth in imports for June was powered by strong demand for consumer goods, according to Neda. EDWIN BACASMAS

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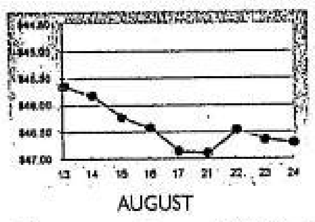

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.70 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 23, 2007

Shares close 0.7% lower

SHARE PRICES YESTERday closed 0.7 percent lower as Wall Street's weakness prompted investors to lock in recent gains ahead of a long weekend, dealers said.

SHARES/ B2

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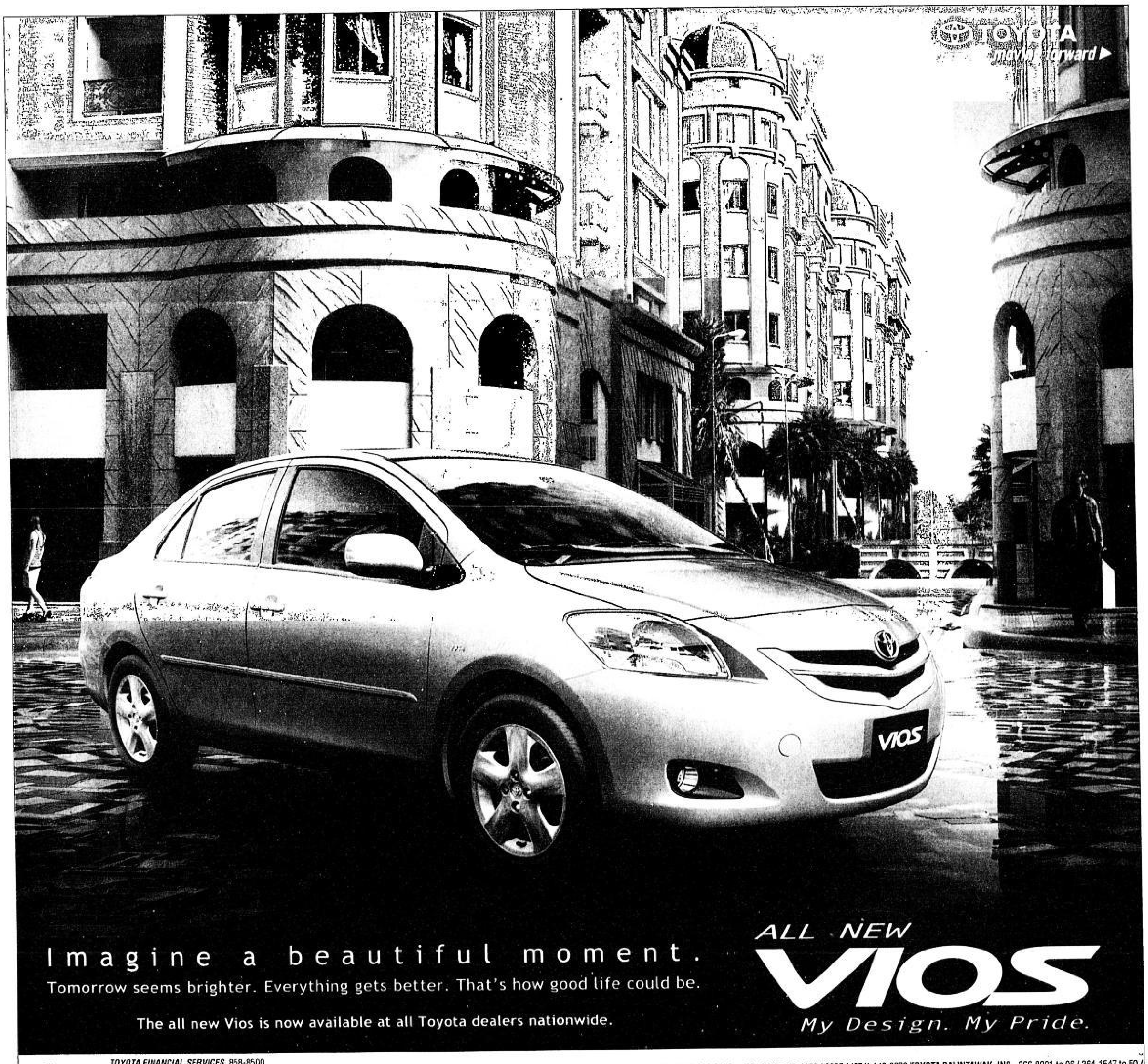
- **More** Napocor assets lined up for sale in '07 /B8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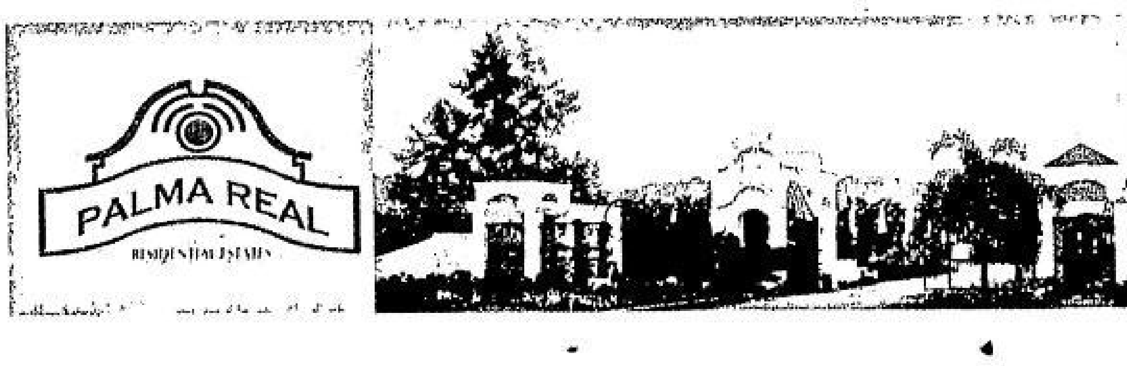

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PSE adopts mining code

Regulations set strict reporting standards

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) has adopted the Philippine Mineral Reporting Code (PMRC), which will require mining companies to meet global disclosure standards.

The PMRC sets minimum standards, recommendations and guidelines for public reporting of exploration results, mineral resources and ore reserves.

The formulation of the PMRC relied on the international codes, such as those from Australia, South Africa, European Union, Canada, particularly the Joint Ore Reserves Committee Code of Australia.

PSE president Francis Lim said in a briefing yesterday that the Philippine Minerals Development Institute Foundation (PMDIF), Mines and Geosciences Bureau, Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, Philippines-Australia Business Council, the Board of Investments and the PSE worked together to craft the implementing guidelines to enforce the rule by January next year.

The Philippines currently has no standards for public reporting on mineral assets.

The BOI said in a statement that public disclosures of mineral resources have followed various industry terminologies and practices but have been loosely used, resulting in "ambiguous" declarations of mineral resources.

The BOI added that there were cases where investors exploited the local mineral prospects and mines to solicit investment funds in overseas stock exchanges or investment houses, based on questionable and unreliable declarations of mineral exploration activities and mineral resources.

Chamber of Mines president Benjamin Philip Romualdez said that with the PMRC in place, investor interest will be protected.

"We don't want companies to take advantage of the less informed. We have to put some guidelines to put us at par with international standards," Romualdez added.

Lim said that mining firms found violating the PMRC may be liable under the Securities Regulation Code or securities laws.

There are currently 14 mining firms listed on the PSE.

Last year, the mining and oil index was up 63.3 percent.

In the first seven months of this year, the mining and oil index expanded by 43.6 percent.

Market capitalization—or the value of stocks based on current market prices—of listed mining firms grew 58 percent to P42.7 billion in 2006 from 2005.

Pico de Loro to sell ₱1.6B in club shares

PICO DE LORO BEACH AND COUNTRY Club Inc. plans to raise P1.6 billion through the sale of club shares to partly pay back selling shareholders who spent for the development of the beach and country club in the Hamilo Coast in Nasugbu, Batangas.

In line with this plan, the Securities and Exchange Commission approved the registration of 4,000 common shares representing proprietary club membership at P400,000 each, or a total of P1.6 billion.

The selling shareholder is Costa del Hamilo Inc., also the developer of the beach club.

Costa del Hamilo will use part of the proceeds to recover the cost of developing the beach and country club, estimated at P768.58 million.

Pico de Loro Beach and Country Club was established to maintain, operate and administer the recreation club. *Elizabeth S. Lacson*

SEC okays Meralco capital stock hike

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SECURITIES AND EXchange Commission has approved the Manila Electric Co.'s application to increase its authorized capital stock from P13.8 billion to P15.5 billion.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Meralco first vice president and treasurer Rafael Andrada said the SEC approval, issued Aug. 22, also allowed the private distribution utility to issue an additional 100.63 million common shares.

These new shares, with a par value of P10 a share, will cover the 10-percent stock dividend to common stockholders as of Sept. 10, he said.

The SEC likewise approved the declassification of Meralco's, A and B shares.

The PSE said the declassification would be reflected on the bourse's computers starting Monday.

In November last year, First Philippine Holdings Corp. said it was considering declassifying Meralco shares, as the price difference between the utility's A and B shares at the PSE continued to narrow.

Meralco A shares can be sold only to domestic investors.

Meralco B shares, on the other hand, can be sold to foreign investors.

Meralco A shares yesterday closed at P94.50 apiece, while Meralco B shares last traded at P95 a share.

Over the past year, Meralco A shares had slumped to a low of P15.75 a share, while Meralco B shares went to as low as P25 a share.

The A and B shares' 52-week low and their closing prices yesterday showed how much the gap between the prices of the two shares had narrowed over the past months.

Meralco is the country's largest private distribution company, with a franchise area covering Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

DA expects more palay

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS expecting 48,000 metric tons of palay to be harvested from its "quick turnaround areas" in Northern Mindanao, which will partly offset losses from the recent dry spell.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said rice production from these additional areas in Northern Mindanao's will involve a budget of P15 million.

Other production areas covered by the QTA program are expected to yield an average of 3.76 metric tons a hectare, he explained.

The QTA program covers a total of 88,174 hectares, with yields expected to reach 337,085 metric tons.

Yap said the yield should be enough to make up for the production shortfall in Luzon's drought-hit areas.

The DA has identified 21 areas in Bukidnon, which will be covered by the QTA program.

Yap said the DA was now working on an array of measures to help the farm sector grow in the second half of the year in the face of climate change.

CURRENCIES

August 24, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.737083	1.000000	46.4180
Japan	Yen	0.006342	0.008604	0.3994
United Kingdom	Pound	1.478367	2.005700	93.1006
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094383	0.128049	5.9438
Switzerland	Franc	0.610724	0.828569	38.4605
Canada	Dollar	0.699519	0.949037	44.0524
Singapore	Dollar	0.484955	0.657938	30.5402
Australia	Dollar	0.602044	0.816793	37.9139
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.955282	2.652731	123.1345
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.196508	0.266603	12.3752
Brunei	Dollar	0.483365	0.655781	30.4400
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000079	0.000107	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022891	0.031056	1.4416
UAE	Dirham	0.200692	0.272279	12.6386
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.356700	62.9753
Korea	Won	0.000783	0.001062	0.0493
China	Yuan**	0.097150	0.131804	6.1181
Argentina	Peso	0.232518	0.315457	14.6429
Brazil	Real	0.369576	0.501404	23.2742
Denmark	Kroner	0.134364	0.182292	8.4616
India	Rupee	0.018066	0.024510	1.1377
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.211805	0.287356	13.3385
Mexico	New Peso	0.066659	0.090436	4.1979
New Zealand	Dollar	0.523906	0.710783	32.9931
Norway	Kroner	0.125847	0.170736	7.9252
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012165	0.016504	0.7661
South Africa	Rand	0.101737	0.138026	6.4069
Sweden	Kroner	0.106703	0.144764	6.7197
Syria	Pound	0.014382	0.019512	0.9057
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022374	0.030355	1.4090
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000343	0.000466	0.0216

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Aug. 23, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Aug. 23, 2007

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on September 10, 2007, 2:00 p.m., 12th Floor, Suite 5, Executive Lounge of the DBP Head Office, Sen.Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (sq.m.)	LOCATION	Minimum Bid
REAL ESTATE LAGUNA				
AM-JA-45	Industrial lot (TCT No. T-231486) w/ bldg., facilities & machinery & equipment.	24,294	117 Progress Ave. corner Industry Drive, Carmelrayville Industrial Subd., Canlubang	P 120,000,000.00
ORIENTAL MINDORO				
SRMO-CP-1	Commercial-residential lot (TCT No. T-103245) with bldgs. & imp.	5,766	Morente & Cabrera St., Poblacion, Roxas	P 11,700,000.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding,
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, Ground Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 892-1566 or 818-9511 locals 2117/2159/2166 for Code starting with AM and 818-9511 loc. 2244 for Code SRMO

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI-Aug 25 & 26, 2007)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 24, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	34,000
73	33.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	59.5	59.5	58	58.5	842,200
73.5	51.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	60.5	60.5	58.5	58.5	1,983,000
935	630	China Banking Corp.	820	825	820	825	15,080
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank, Inc	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,830,000
75.5	37	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	53.5	54	53	54	2,399,700
65.5	32.5	Philippine National Bank	47	47	46	46.5	413,700
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63.5	63.5	63	63	2,700
39.57	14.35	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	25	25	24.5	24.75	2,807,800
90	47	Security Bank Corp.	72	72	72	72	12,700
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	53.5	54	53.5	53.5	198,500
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
2.04	0.6	Bankard Inc	1.94	1.94	1.86	1.88	4,933,000
16.25	1.86	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.75	10.75	10	10.25	156,100
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	470,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	40	41	40	41	2,300
1,725.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,715.00	1,715.00	1,715.00	1,715.00	130
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.3	3.3	3.15	3.15	2,620,000
1,005.00	220	The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc	760	780	760	780	6,500
2,250.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,200.00	2,225.00	2,200.00	2,225.00	1,920
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	3,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.75	4.85	18,429,000
70	42	First Gen Corp.	62.5	62.5	61	61	627,100
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	78.5	78.5	77.5	77.5	381,000
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	14	14	13.25	13.25	8,023,200
116	15.75	Manila Electric Co. "A"	95.5	95.5	93	94.5	293,800
118	25	Manila Electric Co. "B"	95.5	95.5	93.5	95	864,300
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	24,218,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	3,427,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	8	8	7.7	7.9	10,000
1.9	0.92	Trans Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.14	1.22	1.14	1.14	414,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.08	2.08	2	2.04	73,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	24	24	52,800
61	31.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	52	50.5	51	310,900
9	4.7	Pancake House Inc.	8	8	8	8	11,000
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	115,000
4.05	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.24	67,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	62	62.5	61.5	62.5	86,200
88	60	San Miguel Corp. "B"	63	64.5	63	64	983,200
0.66	0.22	Swift Foods Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	50,000
4.7	2	Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	1,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp	16.25	16.25	16	16	3,676,000
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	50,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.57	EEI Corp.	3.7	3.95	3.7	3.95	4,802,000
21.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	405,000
9.2	4.5	Holcim Philippines Inc.	6.4	6.7	6.2	6.6	21,169,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	4.15	4.15	4	4	34,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0.98	1.06	0.96	0.97	29,970,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.3	1,451,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
4	1.76	Active Alliance Inc.	3	4	3	4	70,000
0.75	0.085	Picop Resources Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	13,990,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.1	34,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.0875	0.0875	0.085	0.085	14,800,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.58	0.59	3,410,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2	3,628,000
3.7	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.5	1,661,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	27,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.5	2,851,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	25,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.5	20,425,000
1.38	0.49	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.7	0.72	0.7	0.72	270,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.02	2.02	1.96	1.98	1,028,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	5,000
590	347.92	Ayala Corp.	455	457.5	447.5	450	271,310
5.8	1.06	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.25	4.25	18,641,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7	425,000
6.9	1	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.9	51,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	409,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.82	1.86	1.8	1.82	4,158,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.6	199,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	40,000
11.5	0.33	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.9	5.2	4.75	4.8	7,157,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	6,000
1.54	0.78	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	70,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	400,000
452.5	206.2	SM Investments Corp	350	352.5	347.5	347.5	237,080
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	12,680,000
1.06	0.56	Solid Group Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	50,000
1.6	0.85	South China Resources Inc.	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	336,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	15.5	19	15	19	145,500
2.9	0.8	Vivant Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	9,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	3,900,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.32	1.4	1.32	1.36	5,420,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings, Inc	6.9	7	6.7	7	188,000
19.25	11.04	Ayala Land Inc.	14	14	13.75	14	12,564,500
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1,487,000
2.1	1.2	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp."B"	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	50,000
2.9	1.3	Cityland Development Corp.	2	2	2	2	6,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.63	2,300,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.42	0.44	0.42	0.43	1,260,000
0.99	0.46	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	5,410,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	8,870,000
1.48	0.4	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.12	19,316,000
2.44	1.07	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.5	44,671,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.25	500,000
0.5	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	400,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.62	1,140,000
4.4	1.56	Megaworld Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	36,583,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.85	3.9	74,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	2,790,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	1,000
23	12	Robinson Land Corp.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.5	3,489,400
5.9	1.37	SM Development Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.6	1,541,000
13.5	6.08	SM Prime Holdings Inc	11	11	10.75	11	4,212,300
3.25	0.8	Shang Properties Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	532,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.59	0.61	0.58	0.58	2,320,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	8,000,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5.2	5.2	4.95	5.1	8,078,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31	31.5	31	31.5	12,800
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.6	596,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	1,166,000
1,445.00	970	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,310.00	1,310.00	1,295.00	1,305.00	33,270
2,820.00	1,890.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,545.00	2,550.00	2,530.00	2,540.00	213,310
7.9	3.7	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	1,139,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	5,150,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	10.5	10.5	9.7	9.7	600
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	9	9	8.7	8.7	774,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.031	28,100,000
2.9	1.6	Ionics Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	50,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.185	0.185	23,970,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	149,800,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.6	2.65	2.55	2.55	592,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.6	1.72	1.6	1.7	617,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	31	32.5	30.5	32	2,255,900
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	68,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.52	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3	3.05	3	3.05	1,083,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	1,920,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	10,000
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	43,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.15	4.2	1,394,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12.25	12.25	11.25	11.75	168,500
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	13.25	13.25	13	13	1,333,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.008	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	144,100,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	22,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	4.65	5	4.6	5	61,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.75	13	12.5	12.75	2,062,400
3.1	0.33	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.58	1.64	1.52	1.56	99,467,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.22	2,530,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.25	0.25	0.26	0.25	830,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	73,200,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.023	11,000,000
30	1.2	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	11.5	12.25	11.25	11.5	2,611,000
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	286,200,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.4	7,429,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27.5	27	27	101,300
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.89	590,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.22	1.24	2,585,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	60,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	145,200,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	10,300,000
13	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	32,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	292,100,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	857.64 DOWN	5.18	18,732,930	437,611,205.00
Industrial	4,473.00 DOWN	27.25	134,054,500	890,894,970.00
Holding Firms	1,768.68 DOWN	26.83	149,151,390	476,362,520.00
Property	1,464.18 DOWN	7.06	171,303,200	564,243,060.00
Service	1,533.21 DOWN	1.31	220,489,380	725,515,140.00
Mining & Oil	5,329.38 DOWN	88.94	1,080,480,700	275,887,175.00
All Shares Index	2,052.44 DOWN	12.08		
PSEi	3,206.94 DOWN	22.21		
		GRAND TOTALS	1,774,212,100	3,370,514,070.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Asean seen to take vital step toward integration

Regional leaders set to finalize blueprint for economic community

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIAtion of Southeast Asian Nations are all set to finalize a "blueprint" for regional integration which state leaders are expected to sign in November.

"The time to draft the Asean economic community blueprint is done ... the time to implement the Asean economic community blueprint has now come," Trade Secretary Peter Favila said during yesterday's opening of the 39th Asean Economic Ministers meeting at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Favila has assumed the year-long rotating chairmanship of the economic ministers' body, which is now laying the groundwork for an Asean Economic Community (AEC) by 2015.

The AEC plan calls for the integration of the economies of Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam into a single market and production base.

As a regional 'bloc, Asean member states will have a fighting chance to compete with Asian giants China and India.

Favila said that over the next three days, the ministers gathered here must "tie down all loose ends so that we can finally package the blueprint."

The roadmap was largely completed and was both comprehensive and flexible enough to "allow us to modify this ... to adjust to the vagaries of the global economy and political landscape," Favila said.

And now that the mode of liberalizing trade in services has finally been cleared, there should be no other major issue left to resolve, Favila also said.

There could be "unintended pockets of bureaucratic red tape" that could slow the implementation of the blueprint, but Favila was confident they would be overcome.

He said the blueprint was "not a magic wand" that would automatically transform Asean when 2015 comes, but that it would enable the region to "quietly, but firmly enter an area of greater and more equitable prosperity." *With a report from AFP*

RP ...

From page B1

Also, raw materials and intermediate goods "recovered to 18 percent, with manufactured goods (12.4 percent) and materials/accessories for the manufacture of electrical equipment (28.6 percent) posting strong growth," Santos said.

According to the NSO, consumer goods imports rose by around 40 percent from last month's 39.9 percent, maintaining its strong position.

"The imports of passenger cars and motorized cycles, as well as other durables, expanded by 45.1 percent and 7.9 percent, respectively," Santos added. "Non-durables are also up by around 54.5 percent as [imports of] rice (168.7 percent), dairy products (77.1 percent), and other food items (7.9 percent) rose."

The United States is still the country's top source of imports with a 14.5-percent share in June 2007, followed by Singapore with a 13.6-percent share, while Japan (10.4 percent), China (8.2 percent), and Taiwan (10.4 percent), round up the top five imports sources. *AFP*

Shares ...

From page B1

The composite index gave up 22.21 points to 3,206.94, off the day's low of 3,199.78.

Philippine financial markets will be closed on Monday for a public holiday.

The broader all-share index fell 12.08 points to 2,052.44.

Out of 161 stocks traded, 81 declined, 34 advanced, while 46 stocks ended flat. A total of 1.7 billion shares worth P3.5 billion ($74.88 million) changed hands.

The day's biggest decliners include Ayala Corp. which lost P7.50 to P450.

Its lending arm, Bank of the Philippine Islands, slipped P2 to P58.

SM Investments gave up P5 to P347.50.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone shed P5 to P2,540.

San Miguel shares rose 50 centavos each after the food and beverage firm announced plans to expand brewing in Vietnam and possibly venture into Cambodia.

San Miguel A ended at P62.50, while San Miguel B finished at P64. *AFP*

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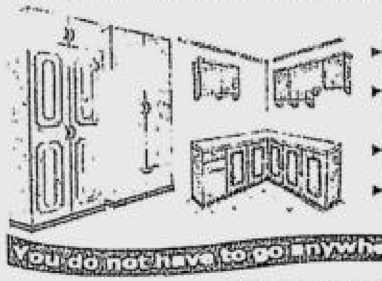

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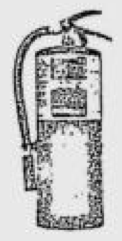

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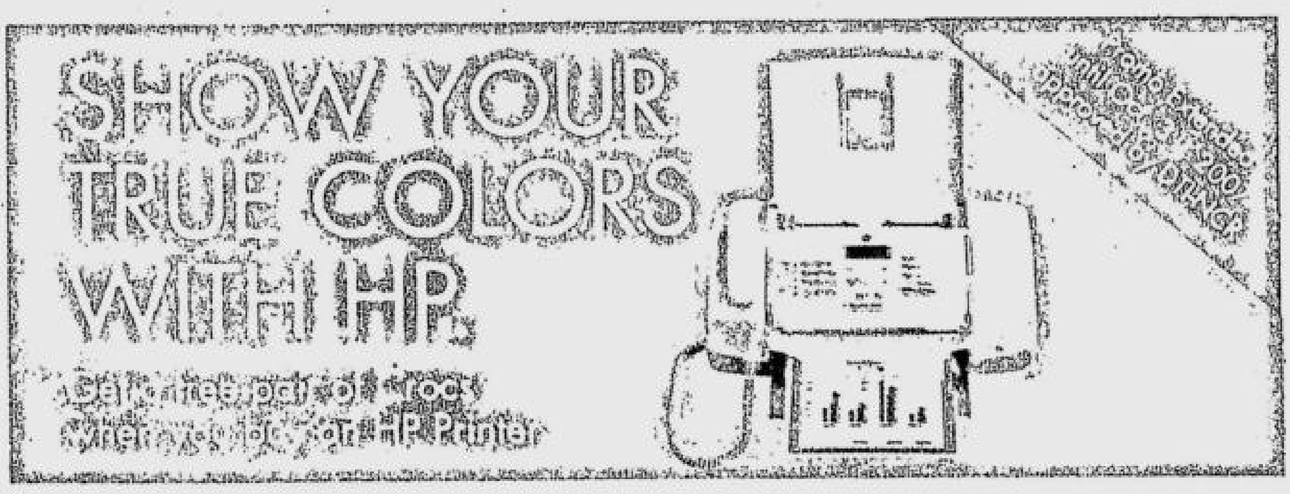
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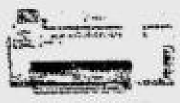

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   NOTE: ^ means only applicable to Beach design.
2. Please see flyers and stickers on boxes for details or contact:
   Yeaps Corporation
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   Email Address: hp_synergy@yeaps.com;
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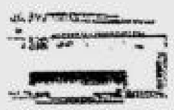

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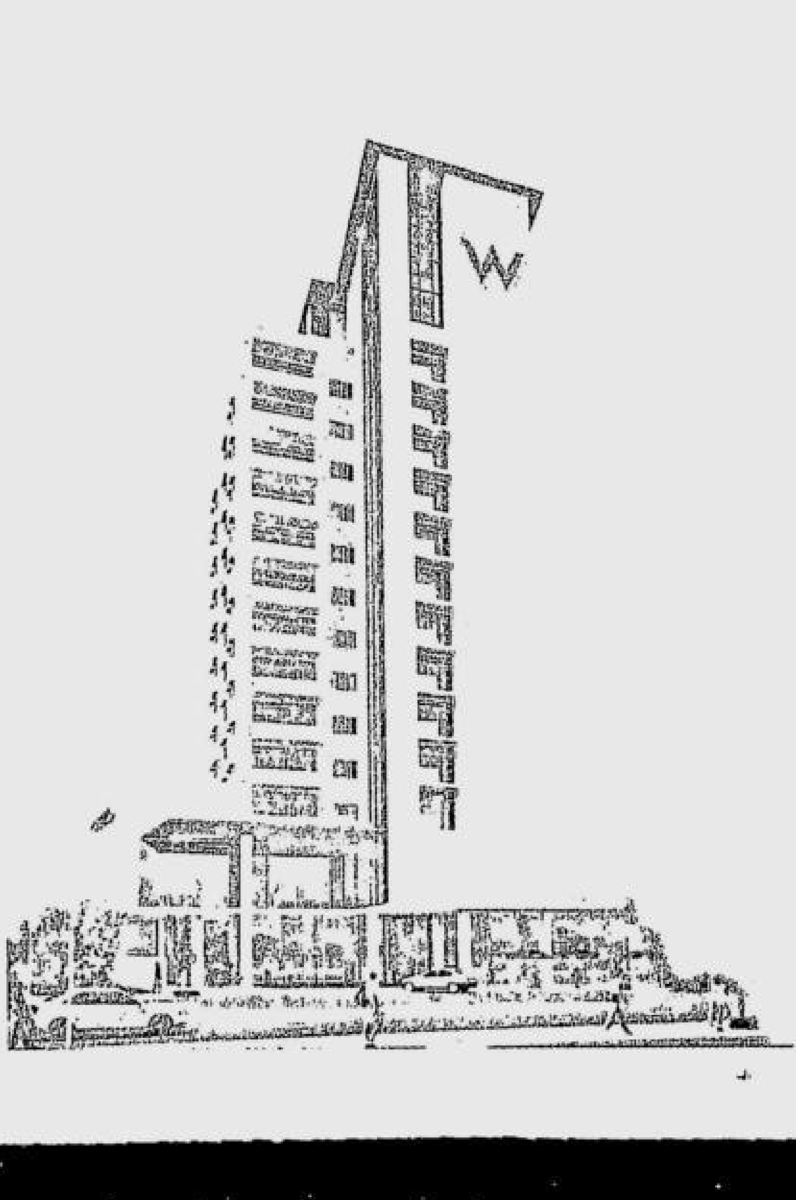

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To all those who condoled with our family on the
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Alfonso T. Yuchengco

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NOTICE OF LOSS

Philippine Duplicators, Inc. Collector's Receipt Nos. 94638-94650 given to Mr. Rexy Janoy were lost last August 13, 2007. Any transaction covered by those CR#s shall not be honored by the company.

Philippine Duplicators, Inc.
CCC Bldg., Leviste Ave.,
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(PDI - Aug. 24 & 25, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estates of Spouses Amando H. Carbonell who died on Aug. 30, 1998 and Augustina Lanting Carbonell who died on July 24, 1973 has been settled extrajudicially under deed of extrajudicial settlement last Aug. 13, 2007 under Doc. 031, Page 08 Book XVIII of the Notarial Register of Notary Public Atty Cesar M. Lao of Antipolo City Province of Rizal.

(PDI-Aug. 18, 25 & Sept. 1, 2007)

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On the Occasion of the

13th Death Anniversary of

NINA ESTRADA PUYAT

on August 26, 2007

Masses will be offered at the following churches:

1)	**SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO** *Forbes Park, Makati*	7:30 am 6:00 pm
2)	**COLEGIO DE SAN AGUSTIN CHAPEL** *Dasmariñas Village, Makati*	6:45 am 6:45 pm
3)	**ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE** *62 Constellation St., Bel-Air*	6:30 am 6:30 pm
4)	**ST. JOHN BOSCO PARISH** *Pasay Road, Makati*	7:30 am 6:00 pm
5)	**ST. FRANCIS DE ASSISI CHURCH** *Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong*	6:30 am 6:00 pm
6)	**OUR LADY OF EDSA SHRINE** *EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave.*	6:30 am 7:00 pm
7)	**CHRIST THE KING** *Greenmeadows*	7:00 am 6:00 pm

Our darling and our delight

CAMILLE THERESE M. DE LOS REYES

Born June 1, 2000 - Died August 23, 2007

Let not hard turf cover her tender bones,
And be not heavy on her, O earth; she
was not heavy on you.

Martial

Her parents, **Liza** and **Milo**, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins request prayers and masses for her eternal repose.

Wake and vigil at the Christ the King Church, Green Meadows, Quezon City. Interment on Sunday, August 26th, following the 1 p.m. mass.

"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you."
"You know the way to the place where I am going."
John 14:2, 4

Calixto V. Espejo

Peacefully joined our Lord
on August 23, 2007 at the age of 73.

A loving husband to his wife **Cora**; responsible father to his children and children-in-law **Ramon & Evis**, **Susan & Jean-Luc** and a sweet **"Lolo"** to his granddaughter **Nina Ella**.

His body lies in state at Sanctuarium, (Chapel Hyacinth) Araneta corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on August 28, 2007 at 10:00 a.m., at Sanctuarium Crematory, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Mario R. Uson

passed away in the grace of our Lord
on August 23, 2007 at the age of 70.

His wife **LUCY**; and sons **ROBERTO** (Bobbit), **MARIO, JR.** (Jing) and **GIGI**; brother **CLEMENTE JR.** and **EDITA** and sister **Angelina** (†) and other relatives request the pious reader to pray for his soul.

His cremains lie in state
at the Loyola Memorial Chapels,
Guadalupe, Makati
until August 26, 2007.

LOUIE PABLO DONATO

Peacefully joined our Creator
and Mama Mary on the Feast of our
Lady's Queenship, August 22, 2007.

His wife **Rosalyn "Sasa" Paez-Donato**; daughters **Louise Marie & Angela Therese**, together with his parents **Edilberto** (†) and **Pacita**; siblings **Willy** (†), **Marvi**, **Sylvia**, **Patrick**, **Fr. Gerry SVD**, **Robert**, **Bong**, **Tattie** and **in-laws** give thanks to the Lord for the blessing of his life.

His remains lie in state at the **Chapel of the Daughters of the Divine Zeal, 151 Libra Street, Cinco Hermanos Subdivision, Marikina City.**

Interment is on **August 27, 2007** at the **Garden of Gethsemane Memorial Park,** Sumulong Highway, Antipolo City **after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.**

In lieu of flowers, contribution to the Sisters of the Daughters of Divine Zeal or Restoration of SVD Christ the King Seminary will be appreciated.

Death Notice

ROBERTO BORJA SR.

Died August 21, 2007 at the age of 84.

His body lies in state at Chapel Love Arlington, Araneta, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, August 28, 2007, 2 p.m. at Eternal Garden, Quezon City.

Dr. ANTONIO RAMOS BAUTISTA, SR.

of Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija and San Juan City
(June 13, 1925 - August 21, 2007)

Peacefully passed away on August 21, 2007 at the age of 82.

His children **JOANNE** and **FRANCIS**, **SUSAN** and **BENJIE**, **VIVIAN** and **RONNIE**, **SONNY** and **BENG** and **MARY ANNE**; grandchildren **BRYAN**, **JOSHUA**, **JERRICA**, **TONI**, **IGO**, **CONCI**, **GELO**, **MONICA**, **ANTON** and **MENTIT**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in prayers for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at **Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc.** #12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 26, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

Obituary Requirements:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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In Loving Memory on the 3rd Death Anniversary of **ANGELI A. ALEJO** who died on August 25, 2004. Her family requests relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Remembering

ANGELI A. ALEJO

(September 23, 1989 – August 25, 2004)

"Three years to this day, you left us. My life goes on without you, but nothing is the same. I have to hide the pain in my heart & tears that fall silently when someone speaks your name, for living my life without you, is the hardest part of all. There could not be more love in a mother's heart than I have for you my dear Angeli. God made you my daughter, so loving, so caring, and so kind & I have the honor of calling you, Mine. Many beautiful memories of years gone by, but deep in my heart your memory is kept to love, to cherish & to never forget. There isn't a day that passes where I don't think of you, missed the things you used to say. You left me precious memories that I always treasure & a love that cannot be replaced. I treasure the bond that we as Mother & daughter shared. I know heartaches in this world are many, but losing you is worse than any. Remembering you is easy, I do it everyday, missing you is the hardest. There's not an hour or any day that goes by when I don't think of you. You are deeply missed, still loved & forever remembered from day to day by Mama. Today, tomorrow, my whole life through. I will love & cherish you my dear Angeli. The only thing that gives me hope is that someday, we'll see each other again."

To our relatives, friends & Angeli's friends, Thank you for still remembering her. Let us continue praying for her. Masses will be offered at Colegio De Sta. Rosa, Makati City; St. Andrew The Apostle Parish Church, Bel-Air, Makati City; Sts. Peter & Paul, Burgos St., Makati City; National Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Dao St., Makati City; Sta. Clara de Montefalco, Pasig City; The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila; Sto. Niño Church, Cebu City; Sto. Rosario Church, Cebu City; Redemptorist Church, Cebu City; Sto. Rosario Cathedral, Dipolog City; Holy Name House of Peace Chapel, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that **Mr. CANESIO H. IGARAN,** whose picture appears above, is accused of the crime of Qualified Theft docketed as Criminal Case No. 98-169517 of the Regional Trial Court of Manila City and is the subject of an outstanding warrant of arrest. Positive information leading to his arrest shall be rewarded. Please contact Atty. Guzman at Tel. Nos. 811-9886 and/or 811-9857.

(PDI--Aug. 25, 2007)

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"PERITONEAL DIALYSIS TRAINING-WORKSHOP"

When	:	November 20, 2007
Time	:	8:00 - 5:00 PM
Venue	:	Dr. Avenilo P. Aventura Hall (formerly MAB Hall)
Reg. Date	:	Oct. 1 - Nov. 18, 2007
Reg. Fee	:	P1,000.00

For inquiries please call:

Ms. Raquel Tejada
925-2401 loc. 2474
Ms. Grace Caamic / Ms. Lissa Ogayon
Mr. Marion Palencia
925-2401 loc. 3828

PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
In cooperation with
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"RENAL TRAINING UPDATE"

When	:	August 28-29, 2007
Venue	:	Dr. Avenilo P. Aventura Hall (formerly MAB Hall)
Reg. Date	:	July 30 - Aug. 22, 2007
Reg. Fee	:	P3,000.00

For inquiries please call:

Ms. Raquel Tejada
925 2401 loc. 2474
Ms. Grace Caamic / Ms. Lissa Ogayon
Mr. Marion Palencia
925-2401 loc. 3828

SCIENCE/HEALTH

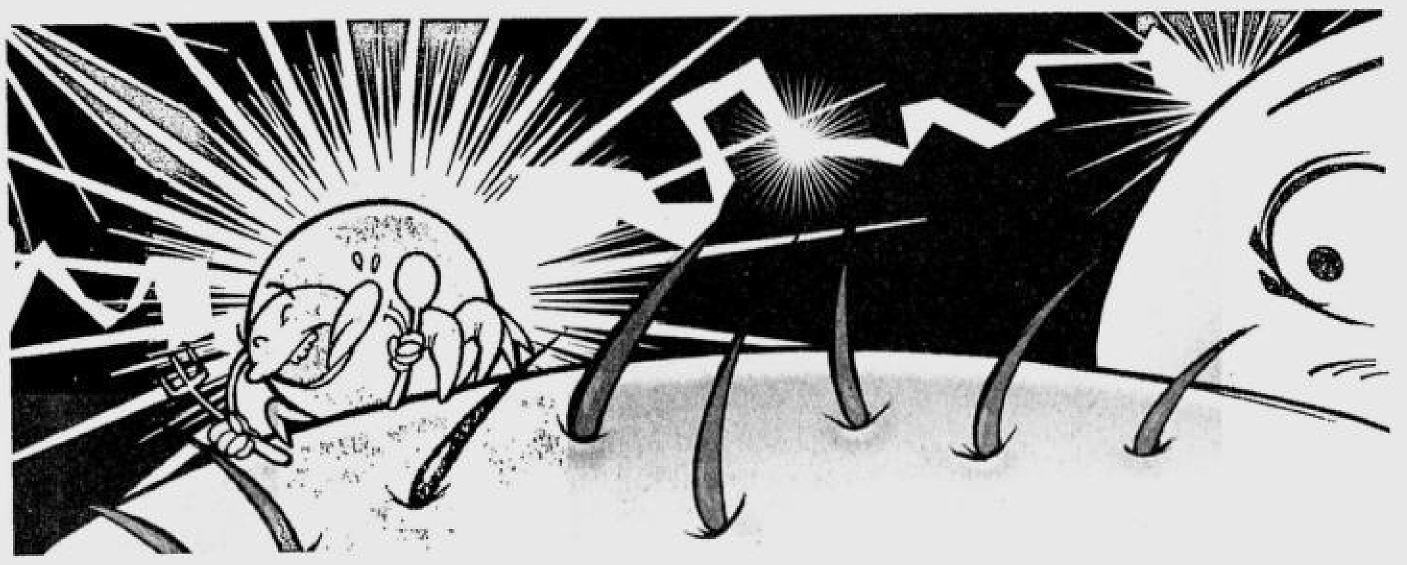
E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Text us your feedback: inquirer hea name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Asthma irritants: mites, thunderstorms etc.

By Tessa R. Salazar



HOUSE DUST mites are common triggers of asthma attacks. They are microscopic creatures that inhabit beddings, pillows, curtains and carpets, or wherever warm and humid. They feed on humans' dead skin, which our body continually shed off.

Dust mites are also easily inhaled, and when this happens, they can irritate the respiratory passages. Members of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians (PCCP) warn the public that the more overcrowded a house is, the higher the risk of asthma attacks among the inhabitants.

Doctors have observed that in Metro Manila, it is not unusual for 10 or more people to share a two-bedroom house. The Philippine College of Physicians-Zuellig Foundation health forum was held recently in Quezon City.

To get rid of dust mites, Dr. Dina V. Diaz of the PCCP suggests washing linens in very hot water, or putting mattresses out in the sun.

Molds can also be asthma triggers, Diaz says. Basements or bathrooms, or any dark and poorly ventilated room in the house, can develop molds, especially during this time of the year when rains alternate with hot, humid weather.

Thunderstorms

And is there a link between thunderstorms and asthma attacks? Asthmatics can test this for themselves. But if you ask PCCP members, there most probably is.

Diaz, past chair of the PCCP's Council on Asthma, cites a study showing thunderstorms being correlated with pollen count levels, pollutants like sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide and also fungal levels.

"The interesting part (of the study) is that it noted that consultations for asthma attacks—whether in the emergency room or unscheduled visits to the doctor's clinic—increased dramatically six hours after a thunderstorm," she says.

Diaz was not able to ascertain from the study, however, if asthma attacks increased during the thunderstorms. According to her, duplicating the study in a local setting would not be so simple.

"It's not easy to conduct pollen, pollutant and fungus counts here in the Philippines," Diaz says.

Several US and UK studies support the existence of "thunderstorm asthma."

Advice

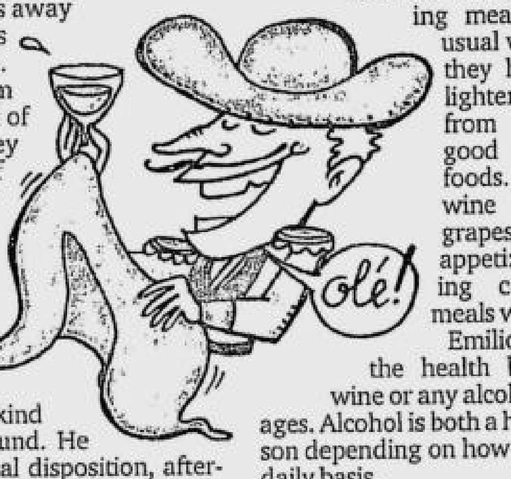
Just the same, Diaz advises asthmatics to follow the old adage: Stay indoors when there's a thunderstorm, "not so much because of the rain, but because something about the storm causes asthma attacks."

"(It might be) imbalanced electrical ions causing more particulates to be suspended (in the air). When you're out in the open, you inhale more of these particulates, and that may cause the attack," she says.

Living the good and healthy life

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES



ALICANTE, SPAIN—IN THIS QUAINT OLD city some 180 kilometers away from Valencia, life goes on at a leisurely pace. The local residents seem to have mastered the art of stress-free living and they say the prevalence of heart diseases here is relatively low.

"I don't know of any relative or friend who had a heart attack for as long as I can remember," says Emilio Lorenzo, an affable Spaniard who was kind enough to show us around. He attributes it to their jovial disposition, afternoon siesta and their fondness for good wines.

In this charming city, just as it is in the whole of Spain, it is almost unthinkable to eat lunch or dinner without drinking wine. Water can be dispensed with during meals but not wine.

Lunch is never rushed. It has to be done leisurely, forgetting any concern one may have at home or at work. "It's better to skip lunch than eat it in a big hurry," Emilio admonishes. "Good food, good wine, good company and good conversation all make for a great lunch and rushing spoils it all."

Anti-stress formula

This is their fiesta-siesta routine which the Spaniards believe is a powerful anti-stress formula for them. They have a great lunch followed by a nap before they resume work. And they can work until night time followed by a good dinner. Of course, with their favorite set of wines again.

Emilio, who my companions teased as the Spanish version of Sean Connery, grew up in Spain but worked in the United States for a while. Although he was earning well in the United States, he decided to come back to Spain because he felt that the American lifestyle and pace of life are conducive to a heart attack and stroke.

"If you want to live a longer life and enjoy it, you live in Spain," he tries to convince us.

Emilio says that Spaniards love good wine but can hardly be classified as alcoholics or drunkards because they never drink in excess. They know just when to stop.

Drink several types

The Spaniards don't just drink one type of wine but usually several types during meals. Aside from the usual white and red wines, they have green wine, a lighter type of wine made from green grapes. It's good with fish and sea foods. They also have port wine made from special grapes and it's taken with appetizers or pastries during cocktails and after meals with dessert.

Emilio is partly right about the health benefits of drinking wine or any alcohol-containing beverages. Alcohol is both a health potion and poison depending on how much you drink on a daily basis.

Taken in moderation, it can be even therapeutic. It relaxes the blood vessels, improves the circulation and enhances the production of some important enzymes. In excess though, the reverse happens. It constricts the blood vessels, adversely affects brain function, weakens the heart and may cause it to weaken causing heart failure.

Alcohol abuse

In fact, many health experts believe that alcohol abuse is the most common cause of reversible hypertension, and when sustained for a prolonged period of time, it can cause irreversible damage to one's health.

Many men in the peak of their careers become disabled because of the effects of alcohol on the heart, brain and liver.

What is the allowable limits of alcohol drinking? Up to one oz or 30 cc of ethanol or pure alcohol per day is still considered healthy. This is equivalent to 250-300 cc of wine, two bottles or 720 cc of beer and 30-40 cc of whisky.

So, one to two portions of alcohol-containing beverages a day, containing 0.5 to 1.0 oz of ethanol, is believed to be still healthy and need not be prohibited. In fact, drinking this much has been associated with fewer episodes of heart attacks. Beyond these limits, one may be courting danger already.

"Drinking wine is part of the good life," Emilio exclaims. I nodded courteously, but with some reservations.

Drink and be merry so long as you keep your limits. Problem is, this is not an easy thing to do.

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Perceptions of color

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

"I SEE THE MOST INTENSE colors in spoken words (mine or others) and in my thoughts," a blogger known as FemaleScienceProfessor posted last month.

"You see words when people talk to you? Now I just feel boring," one of her readers responded.

Perceiving things

The blogger has a condition called synesthesia. Synesthetes, as they are called, perceive things with two or more senses simultaneously. To try and understand what they sense, imagine that each letter in this sentence has a different color. Perhaps all the a's are blue, the e's are yellow, and so on. Or perhaps each word is a different color, i.e., you see the word "Mary" in a pastel pink.

Most synesthetes associate letters and numbers with specific colors, which can be useful for memorizing names and terms. Other synesthetes don't just see color, they can also hear or taste them. Imagine you hear the opening notes of Beethoven's Fifth, and you see three dots of purple followed by a line of red. Or try saying the word "coffee" and realize it makes your mouth feel like you're eating peppermint candy.

A professor in Hawaii recently estimated that there could be one synesthete among every 23 people. If he's right, and there are that many people walking around literally seeing colors where others see black and white, why isn't synesthesia a household word? Could it be that synesthetes assume everyone else sees the world the same way they do? Or could there be millions of people suffering from a mass delusion involving more colors than the Crayola company can produce?

Series of experiments

To prove synesthesia's existence, neurophysiologist Danko Nikolic and his colleagues from the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research in Germany conducted a series of experiments. Their work appeared in the June issue of the journal Psychological Science.

Nikolic et al. used a modified version of a psychology test based on the idea that people read words faster than they can process the colors the words appear in. The researchers worked with six synesthetes and each one's choice of letters and numbers with their associated colors.

Each synesthete and two nonsynesthete control volunteers were then shown the characters they'd chosen and asked to identify the three colors they appeared in. If one synesthete saw "A" as dark blue, for example, Nikolic et al. would show him the letter first in a similar shade (navy blue), then in opposite color on the color wheel (deep orange), and then in a color independent of the first two choices (green).

Over a series of repeated timed trials, each participant was asked to identify the colors they saw for each character. Nikolic et al. found that the times recorded for the control pairs of nonsynesthetes were practically identical. On the other hand, the synesthetes' times varied widely. They took the most time identifying the opposite colors.

Lifelong associations

Nikolic et al. theorize that the trouble might be due to lifelong associations. A synesthete used to seeing an "A" as red had trouble naming the color when it was green. Identifying the independent colors took less time, but they had the least trouble identifying the colors closest to the ones they normally associated with the characters.

Previous studies had shown that certain cells in the brain which coded for specific colors shut off when the opposite colors appeared. This information, combined with the synesthetes' data, led Nikolic and his team to conclude that synesthesia was a real condition and not a product of many imaginations.

One final note from someone responding to FemaleScienceProfessor's comments: "I've always been kind of jealous of people who see numbers and letters in color. It seems like it would be really beautiful." It's rare to find a condition people would actually like to have. How synesthesia works is still a mystery, but it seems to be a research topic both fascinating and colorful, in every sense of the word.

* * *

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

The alternative chicken

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

DARAG, A CHICKEN FOUND IN Western Visayas, has become a healthy alternative to commercial chicken. Annie Lyn Bacani of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) says, "Prominent yellowish-brown plumage for females and shiny red for males, black tail feathers and grey shanks describe the Darag."

Results of a study done by Ma. Elena G. Fernandez of the FNRI show that Darag meat, when cooked, is rich in potassium and high in protein. It has less fat and more unsaturated fatty acids than commercial chicken. Panelists rate the Darag meat, cooked as tinola, high in flavor. Darag delicacies in Panay, Iloilo, Negros and Guimaras include tinola, litson manok, tinuom and chicken inasal.

To learn more about Darag, call Mario V. Capanzana, FNRI director, at 837-2934 or 3164, e-mail mvc@fnri.dost.gov.ph or visit the website at www.fnri.dost.gov.ph.

Hi-tech goats

The carabao is our national animal, but goat raising has gone hi-tech. According to Bengie Gibe of the DOST, goat raising is a practical and low-maintenance venture that can be integrated easily with farming. It requires little capital with high return on investment in a short time. Of course, to be viable and sustainable, goat raisers must learn proper management practices.

Gibe talks about three barangays in the town of Camiling in Tarlac, the testing site for a development program known as Farmers Livestock School on Integrated Goat Management. Community-based, the program is a joint initiative of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Extension, local government unit (LGU), OPVet, and Tarlac College of Agriculture (TCA).

Farmer-participants agree to meet at least once a week for three to four hours for six months, with facilitators to guide them on self-awareness and empowerment, and help them realize that solutions on goat raising are within their reach. Farmers learn to make maps and graphical calendars, trace resource flow, and ways to reduce goat sicknesses and deaths.

Multiplier farm

TCA also hosts a multiplier farm that upgrades goats as a source of reliable breeding stocks. Boer and Anglo Nubian upgrades are loaned to farmers to improve the quality of their goat stocks. Through a cooperative, farmers can avail of services such as buck swapping, purchase of veterinary medicines, raw materials for feed ingredients, and marketing of their produce.

Moreover, the cooperative has partnered with a private corporation to provide marketing for the farmers' goats, which sell at P100 per kilogram live weight. The program's success has spurred a spillover effect of the adopted technologies to neighboring and visiting farmers from all over the country.

Goat milk, anyone?

* * *

Dr. Queena N. Lee-Chua is professor of math and psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. Contact her at blessbook@yahoo.com.

PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

MAÑOSA believes there are lots of benefits when hiring an architect since he or she could help choose the materials which are suitable to the budget not to mention the ability to design the house wisely and avoid wasted space.

Who needs an architect?

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

THOSE WHO BELIEVE architects are only for prominent and well-to-do families, think again.

If one asks architect Jose Mañosa even families with just a million pesos to spend deserves the services of an architect.

"Actually, they are the ones architects should be serving more often considering these families could not afford to be wrong when deciding how the design of their house should be, how to choose the right materials and how to use the available space wisely," he says.

But Mañosa, who has 43 years of experience behind him, is quick to clarify that skimping on materials or adopting structurally inferior building practices should not be among the options.

15 years

"Any conscientious architect knows that he/she is responsible—for 15 years—for the structural integrity of his/her work. Besides, if anything happens to the project, people will readily blame the architect (and not the contractor or anyone else) so we have to protect our name," Mañosa explains.

He says he finds it challenging when his client would tell him he or she only got this much money but still would like to have a house that still satisfies his or her esthetic taste.

"The trend now is to be as practical as possible, be able to to come up with an architectural design that uses efficient methods and long-lasting materials," Mañosa explains.

Many ways

Indeed, there are many ways to save without endangering a structure's integrity.

"Which is why it is important for us to talk to our partner suppliers on what new construction method or material they could offer us," he says.

"But like all partner suppliers that meet with us, we don't just take their word for it," the architect says.

Considering their name and their firm's reputation at stake, Mañosa says they always put the material they will use above all else.

Grill

"We sort of 'grill' them, asking where that material has been used, check its track record here and elsewhere. We even go out and talk to people who have used it and ask them what's their impression and how did it perform in their particular project. Afterward, we test it ourselves," Mañosa says.

He cites James Hardie as an example: "We know they are an internationally renowned company but we still need to know for ourselves how their products would perform here and how their products will impact our work."

He adds that only after thoroughly reviewing the material could he recommend using it in his client's project.

Indeed, building a house is an important event in everyone's life. Mañosa says that if one needs a doctor in matters of health, so is an architect simply because he could help explore options and help find the best solution based on one's needs, the existing conditions and, of course, the budget.

PREFERRED MATERIAL

IN RECENT TIME, FIBER cement is becoming a preferred building material in new homes as a replacement to wood.

Composed of cement, sand and cellulose fiber (as well as other additives), fiber cement is a favorite choice in the exterior and interior of houses and buildings, from exterior cladding and internal lining, to decorative finishes, and even in floorings.

"This material is now very popular in both commercial construction and in residential home building because of its advantages over traditional wood products. Aside from the fact that the material is asbestos-free, it is also resistant to fire, termite attacks, humidity and hot weather, cold and windy climate, and even moisture," explains James Hardie project sales manager Jonald Lalusin, whose team has been regularly meeting with architects and other players in the industry to explore possible areas of cooperation in using their HardiFlex brand of products.

Advantages

Lalusin says that with this cooperation, their company is able to show the advantages of using HardiFlex, how their product could help create houses and other structures that are both well-designed and economical.

"Everyone's dream home is different. That is why James Hardie offers a wide selection of HardiFlex products that contribute to more creative design, faster construction and more cost-efficient housing," he says.

An Australian company, James Hardie is a global leader in fiber cement technology.

In 1998, just two years after its establishment in the Philippines, the company set up a world-class fiber cement plant in Cabuyao, Laguna to serve its domestic and regional market, thus, becoming one of the biggest Australian investments in the country.

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Light pollution

Conclusion

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

LIGHT POLLUTION, ALSO KNOWN as photopollution or luminous pollution, is excessive and obtrusive light caused by its wasteful dispersion from lighting fixtures or from reflection on various surfaces.

It refers to light that is disturbing, wasteful and harmful.

Reducing light pollution

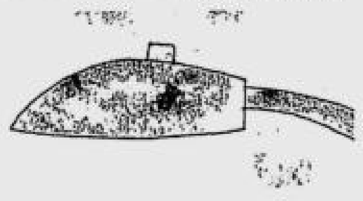
The best method for reducing light pollution depends on the particular problem in a given situation. However, there are some simple guidelines that can be followed to achieve this goal.

Before installing any lights, determine if lighting is really necessary. If security is the main goal, find out if it could be better attained by segregation of the area by a fence or security grilles.

Must billboards, car parks and exterior areas of buildings, be lighted the entire night?

Once it is determined that lighting is really needed, then the appropriate type of lighting should be installed. It is a misconception that with more light there is better safety and security. Actually, what is really needed is having the right amount of light, in the right place and at the right time.

For domestic security lights, a 150-watt lamp is enough. Using high power lamps that range from 300 to 500 watts for security purposes is not preferred because they create too much glare. A 9-watt lamp for all-night use is more than adequate for the security lights of most premises.



TO REDUCE light pollution, use full cut-off light fixture with a flat lens. This type restricts the light to the target area.

Whenever possible, use the lowest wattage or intensity needed to accomplish the light's purpose. Two hundred fifty watts is the maximum intensity for most commercial applications and 26 watts for compact fluorescent for residential lighting.

Lights have to be properly adjusted to allow the illumination of specific areas intended and for it not to trespass onto the neighboring property.

Security lights should be located to monitor the movement of people in the area intended and not beyond.

The effects of glare can be reduced by installing lights with beam angles below 70 degrees.

Do not install fixtures that spread light above the horizontal.

If uplighting has to be used, install baffles or reflectors above the lamp to reduce wasted upward light.

Using timers, occupancy sensors or photocells to switch off lights when not needed is another way to reduce light pollution.

One of the most negligent ways of wasting energy is by using inefficient lighting fixtures that direct their light away from their intended targets. This is most visible in billboards that use excessive lighting only to scatter it beyond the target area, like trees and nearby structures.

Use full cut-off light. This type of lighting fixture is designed to restrict the light to the target area instead of scattering it. It uses lighting energy efficiently because it reduces the chance for light to escape skyward or above the plane of the horizontal. Excess light should be eliminated.

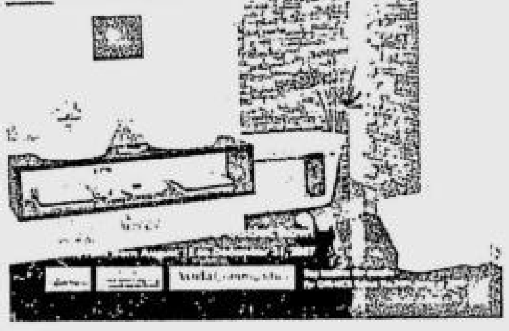
Redesigning existing lighting plans is also another way to reduce light pollution. Studies can be made to determine if existing light is actually needed.

Other compelling reasons

Reducing light pollution helps preserve the ambience of the night. This natural ambience for rest and body repair seems to be alien to many people in today's busy world that is characterized by cities and towns that do not sleep.

Light pollution contaminates the environment. It affects the air that we breathe through the burning of fossil fuels to generate more electricity only to be used for excessive and wasteful lighting.

By reducing light pollution, we not only reduce obtrusive lighting but also help conserve energy and protect ourselves and the environment.



The Capital Towers: Freedom of space, style

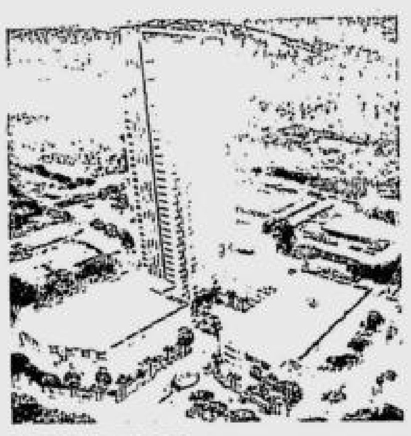
FOR THE NEO-DYNAMIC LIFE-styles of urban dwellers, space in an otherwise congested city means a lot. This was one of the considerations in planning The Capital Towers—the newest condominium landmark to rise in bustling Quezon City.

The Capital Towers addresses the need for space while blending style, elegance and functionality fit for modern lifestyles.

Flexibility

Designed by world-renowned experts in space management, it harmonizes functionality and esthetic appeal in its provision of big space. Its modular features allow residents to enjoy freedom of movement and lifestyle along with the flexibility for some personalized interior styling.

Its units also come with lofty ceilings and sizeable windows, through which residents can enjoy the magnificent panorama of Makati and Ortigas, the picturesque Manila Bay and the cascading terrains of Antipolo.



THE CAPITAL Towers

Outdoors, The Capital Towers has space big enough for all kinds of recreation and leisure activities. Residents will step out to refreshing landscaped podium gardens with reflecting pools and water features.

The Capital Towers also features a business center, a multipurpose hall, a daycare and children's area as well as a fitness center complemented by a jogging path.

Location

Conveniently located on E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, The Capital Towers gives you accessibility like no other. It is near St. Luke's Medical Center, the De Los Santos Medical Center, Trinity University of Asia, St. Joseph's College, Christ the King Church, Quezon City Sports Club and Waltermart Supermarket.

Its neighborhood also features various array of food establishments and cafés.

Find freedom from the congested city and retreat to your own big space. Come home to The Capital Towers.

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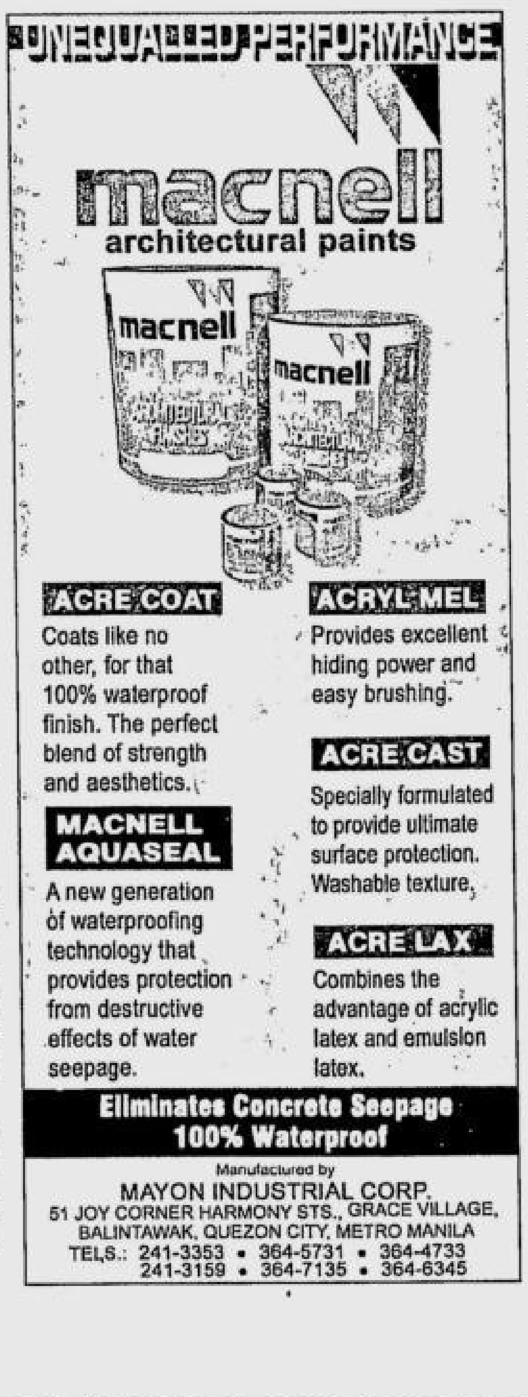

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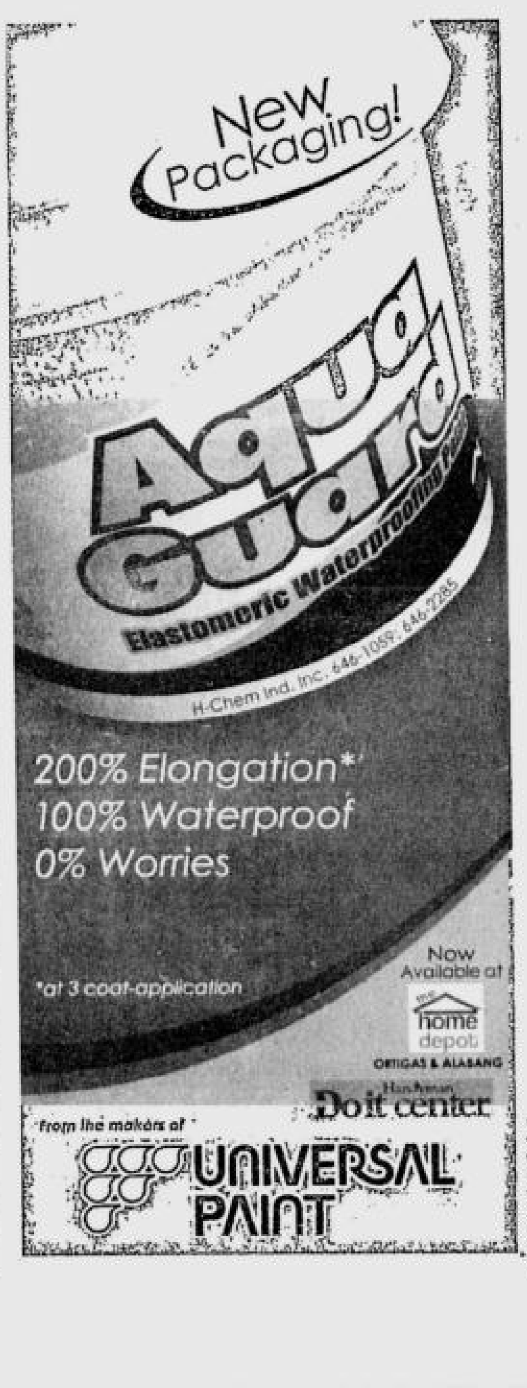

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BUSINESS

More Napocor assets lined up for sale in '07

2 geothermal plants, one diesel-fired facility identified for privatization

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE PREPARING FOR THE BIDding of some big-ticket items in the coming months, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. has identified more National Power Corp. assets for privatization within the year.

PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco said plans were underway for the auction of the 192.5-megawatt (MW) Palinpinon geothermal facility and the 146.5-MW Panay diesel-fired power plant as a package before the end of the year.

The 685-MW Tiwi-Makban geothermal power complex will also be offered within 2007, he said.

PSALM is bidding out the 600-MW Calaca coal-fired power plant in October, the 175-MW Ambuklao-Binga hydropower plant package in November, and the 25-year National Transmission Corp. concession in December.

"From 11 percent (of total Napocor assets) in 2006 to 50 percent in 2007, we expect to hit the 70-percent privatization requirement for open access by end-2008 and complete the sale of the remaining plants in Luzon and Visayas by 2009," Tampinco said in a statement.

PSALM has so far sold 24.8 percent of Napocor's Luzon and Visayas generation capacities, boosting its bid to hit the 50-percent privatization level before the end of the year.

By next year, PSALM hopes to achieve a 70-percent privatization level, to fulfill one of the remaining unmet requirements for the implementation of retail competition and open access.

"Ultimately, competition should improve the delivery of power services and bring down power rates in the country, which is one of the two recent directives of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The other is the acceleration of the power privatization program," PSALM president and chief executive Jose Ibazeta said.

He said ongoing reforms in the power sector should encourage investors to expand their existing capacities as well as put up new capacity additions.

Key to power sector reforms, he said, was the entry of more capital from the private sector, which would help create a competitive environment and broaden the industry's ownership base, he added.

The national government can expect between $5 billion and $7 billion from the privatization of key energy sector assets and stakes this year, including the government's remaining 40-percent stake in PNOC Energy Development Corp.

Q2 GDP growth seen at 6.1-6.7%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE DOMESTIC ECONOMY likely expanded by 6.1-6.7 percent in the second quarter from a year ago despite the dampening effects of the dry spell, the National Economic and Development Authority said yesterday.

Neda director for policy planning and research Dennis Arroyo said this was a "reasonable pace," although the projected second quarter growth was slower than the 6.9 percent in the first three months.

He said the May elections and the rising remittances from overseas Filipino workers supported domestic demand during the period.

From April to June, the agriculture sector was projected to have expanded by 3.3-3.7 percent over a year ago.

"But it's the third quarter that will be hit by the drought the hardest," Arroyo said.

He said services would continue to be the most significant growth driver. The sector was seen to have expanded by 7.2-8 percent during the quarter, led by the transport and communication sub-sectors.

Arroyo said the volume of passengers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport during the quarter posted a robust growth of 14.5 percent.

Industry, which includes manufacturing, was expected to have expanded by 6.1-6.7 percent during the period.

On the demand side, he said the economy continued to be fueled by strong domestic consumption.

"OFW inflows are still strong, and with a subdued inflation and low interest rates, there's impetus for consumer spending and bank lending," Arroyo said.

Consultancy firm Global Source, in a July 31 country report, said since the Asian crisis of 1997, the Philippine growth story revolved around OFW remittances, which had been growing at 11 percent yearly in the last 10 years to 2006. This accounted for 10 percent of the total economic output.

IPVG focusing on digital in-game ads

By Riza T. Olchondra

LISTED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS company IPVG Corp. is targeting digital advertising, citing research that Internet advertising revenue worldwide amounted to nearly $17 billion last year.

"Undeniably, the Internet is the biggest marketplace there is. Today, there are more than a billion Internet users. The bulk of the 'cyber-population' is in Asia," IPVG said in a statement on Friday.

"Currently, advertisers in the Philippines are focused on tri-media as their primary medium due to reach and frequency of use, it's their comfort zone. But if we can show how powerful and effective in-game advertising is—that it can actually translate to product sales and better brand recall—then we will see a wide adoption of this new advertising medium."

Piper Jaffray & Co., an Internet media and marketing research team, released a report in February this year that global online advertising revenue was expected to reach $81.1 billion in 2011.

IPVG said its online gaming arm, IP e-Games, has seen this potential and was allotting its time and effort to increase awareness among advertisers.

Enrique Gonzalez said in an interview that IPVG expected digital advertising to account for as much as 20 percent of online gaming revenues two years from now.

Gonzalez said IP e-Games has piloted ad campaigns for telecommunications and technology companies in popular flagship game, RAN Online, and expects to attract more campaigns over the next few months.

Landbank loans to priority sectors hit P79.1B in H1

By Amy R. Remo

LANDBANK OF THE PHILIPPINES HAS REleased P79.1 billion worth of loans to priority sectors in the first half of the year.

The amount, according to LandBank, benefited about 171,000 small farmers and fishermen nationwide.

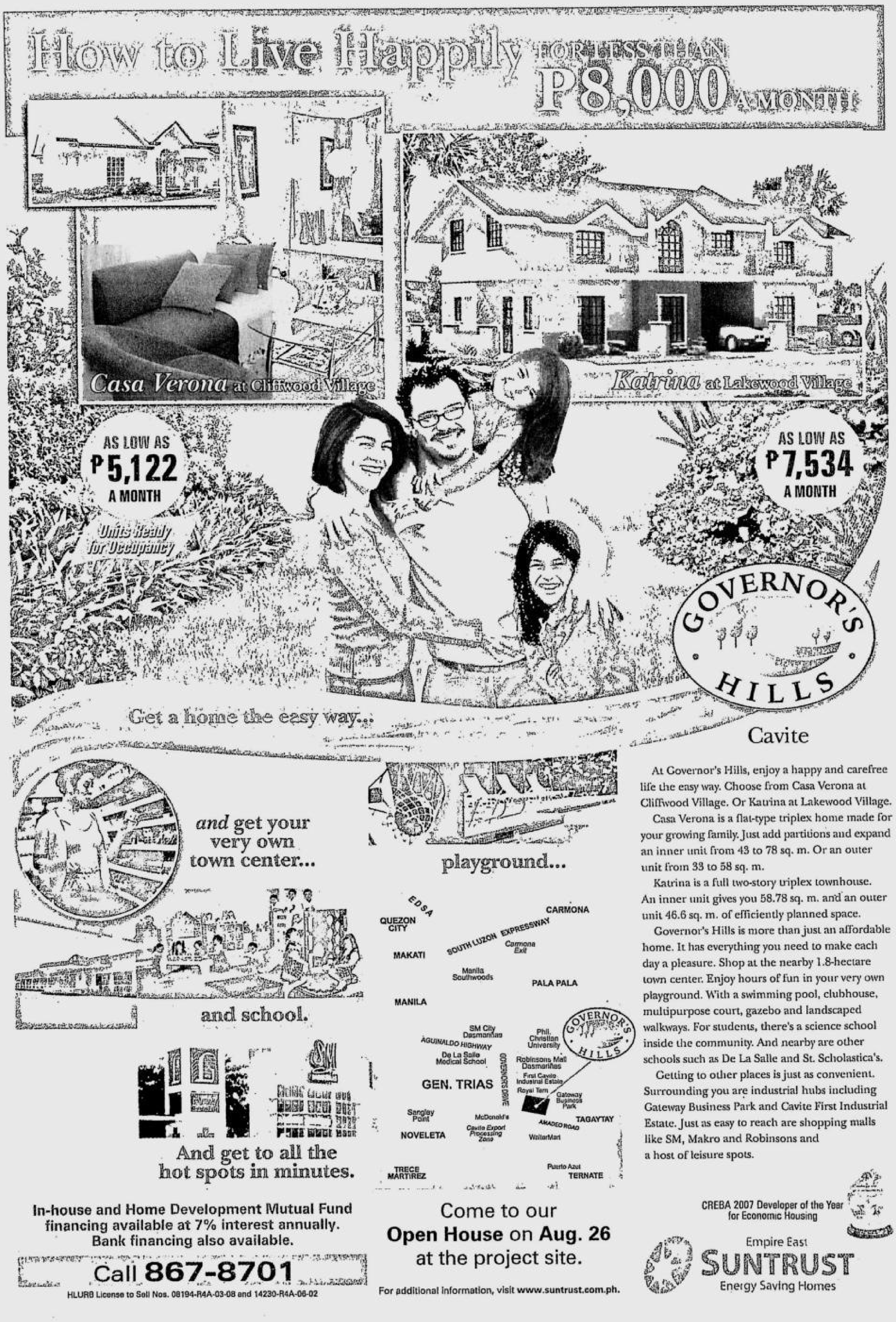
Priority sectors include small farmers and fisherfolk, micro enterprises and SMEs, livelihood projects, agribusiness, agri-infrastructure, agri-related and environmental conservation ventures.

In a press briefing, Landbank president and CEO Gilda E. Pico said loans extended to priority sectors accounted for 70 percent of the bank's total loan portfolio during the period of P112.7 billion.

In the first half of 2006, loans to the priority sector amounted to P78.2 billion, or 65 percent of Landbank's total loan portfolio.

Pico said the increase was due mainly to the higher loans extended to local governments' agri-infrastructure projects, which grew to P15.8 billion from last year's P13 billion.

The farmers and fisherfolk, and the SME and microenterprises sectors accounted for the largest share of P33.3 billion. Small farmers got P7.1 billion while fisherfolk borrowed P373 million.



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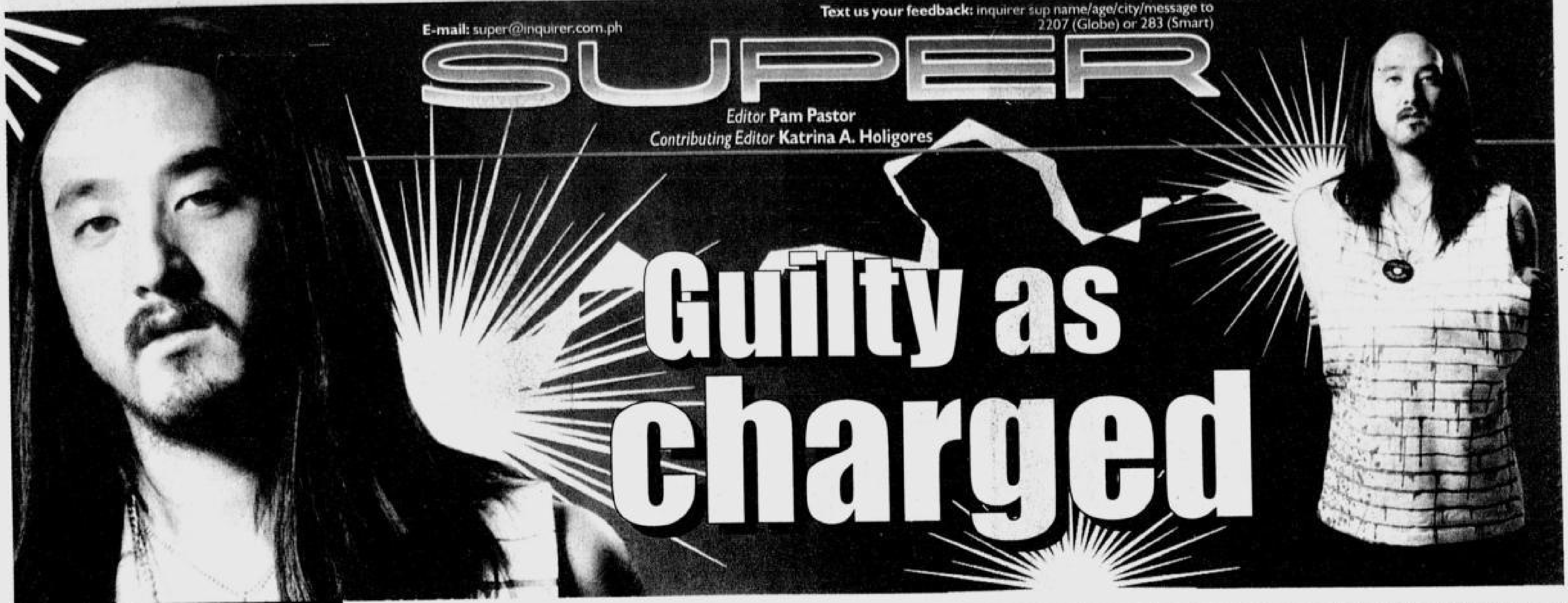

Guilty as charged

We likey Steve Aoki

by Paolo Reyes

Social Climbing in the Virtual World

by Tals Diaz

Spilling new blood

by James Gabrillo

Why does Limbo Rock?

by Katrina A. Holigores

Unplug for the planet

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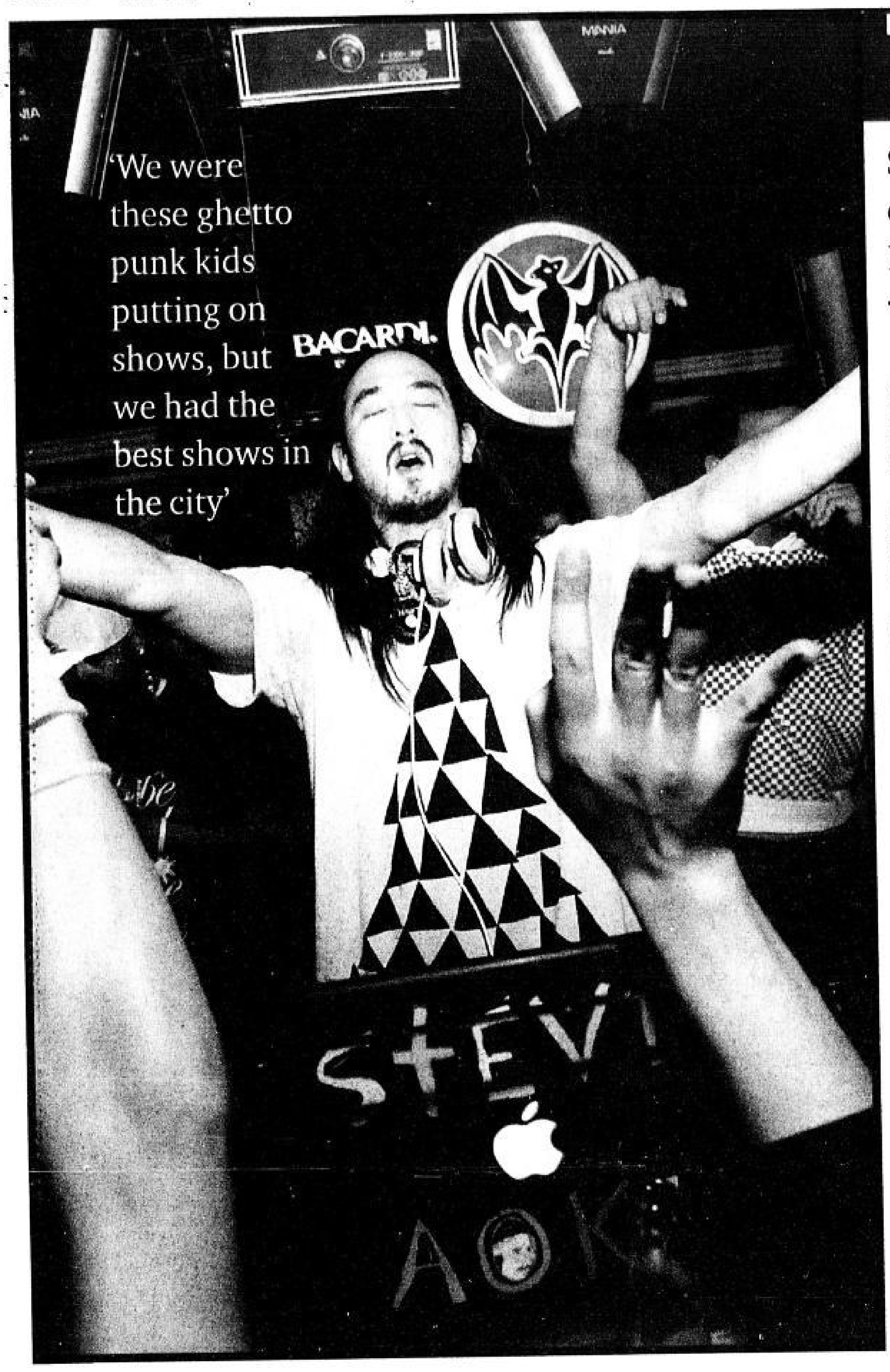


'We were these ghetto punk kids putting on shows, but we had the best shows in the city'

Super surfs the electro 'mash' pit with DJ Steve Aoki

WAY BEFORE HE took a blind dive from the DJ deck and surfed through the welcoming hands of 1,000 wailing fans, we already knew it was going to be a wild night.

The Kid Millionaire was clearly intoxicated—not with the copious amounts of Grey Goose he chugged down straight from the bottle, but with his music.

Stage diving and crowd surfing aside, DJ Steve Aoki—otherwise known as the high-flying kingpin of L.A.'s indie mafia—definitely knows how to drop a bomb of party rocking beats. And if the ear-piercing decibel levels were any indication, we're pretty sure the people gathered at Embassy that night totally embraced his mashed-up menu of electro Nu Wave sounds.

The Hollywood A-lister met with Manila hipsters last Aug. 8, transforming a seemingly sluggish night beset by knee-high floods and spirit-dampening downpours into a five-hour thrill ride powered by the pounding, adrenaline-fueled music of the Benihana heir.

With his long, jet-black hair, scrawny waif-like figure, and fuzzy Fu Manchu mustache, it would be easy to mistake Aoki for an Americanized college coed surviving on a shoestring budget.

But anyone who has read their fair share of People and PageSix will know that underneath the faux-faded T-shirt, zippered hoodie, and oversized sunglasses is the business-savvy mastermind behind Dim Mak (which roughly translates to "Death Touch," a wry nod to his childhood hero Bruce Lee), the indie record label that launched the career of the British neo-pop sensation Bloc Party, as well as The Kills.

LOST IN TRANSIT

Paolo R. Reyes

During his legendary Tuesday night slams at Hollywood hotspot CineSpace, where he schmoozes with a crew of celebrity *amigos* like Lindsay Lohan and model-actress half-sister Devon ("Sin City," "2 Fast 2 Furious"), Aoki trumpets the talents of the hippest up-and-coming bands.

Before he hopped on a Tokyo-bound jet to crank up the volume at Shibuya's La Fabrique, Super caught up with the Kid Millionaire.

Let's begin with the name. Why Kid Millionaire?

Believe it or not, my name was originally Mama Millionaire, which I got from a lyric of a song. Then one night, I was DJing with this rapper, and he kept screaming the name out loud to the crowd. After a while he stopped, looked me in the eye, and said, "But you're a guy?!"

CRANKING up the volume

I heard you started Di you were still in college.

My college years were gine room" of the whole l ginning of everything as mean, I was booking ba apartment! I was writing zine, getting educated, a concerts in my living room

And you managed school?

People were saying, there are insane! You've this living room when yo Barbara." Everyone wa there. It was a great ex power of word-of-mouth.

That power and energy alize that you don't need to get something done. W ghetto punk kids putting we had the best shows city, possibly in the e learned the fundament thing at that time.

Do you have any c signing up a band?

That's a feeling. It's no genre or sound. When so into the room, they emit a gy, which can be positiv

Meet the Coke heads

UNBOTTLE THESE SEVEN refreshing teens heralding Coca Cola's new campaign of saying yes in the face of no!

Enchong Dee

Taking the plunge

This guy is a monster. At least that's what his friends call him - "Halimaw" in the swimming pool. With his very powerful and precise moves in the water, he's already received more than 400 medals in his past competitions, including a silver in the 2005 SEA Games. This year, he is gunning for another gold in the Thailand SEA Games.

Being part of national swimming team is not an easy feat especially since he has to train twice everyday, before and after classes, and still do modelling on the side!

Prior to the SEA games, he is preparing himself now as he goes to Bangkok, Thailand for the 24th World University Games where about 150 students will be joining from all over the globe. Enchong will again compete in the swimming events as the delegate of his university and the country.

Chelsea Bernasconi

Snow White with a deadly kick

You could call her Snow White with a sword. In a world where martials arts is usually associated with men, it's refreshing to see a pretty girl kicking serious butt. Wushu champ Chelsea is the epitome of beauty and strength.

At the age of fourteen, she already earned more than 300 medals in Wushu competitions. Last August 2006, this girl won the most coveted gold medal in the spear event of the first World Junior Wushu Championships in Kuala Lumpur.

Joe Walker

Satisfies his cravings

Nineteen year old Joe grew up in London, and now whips up local culinary feasts in his native Philippines. The handsome chef has traveled around the world before finally deciding to stay put and serve in the country.

With a degree in culinary arts, Chef Joe is an outstanding master at culinary arts.

He has decided to pursue his dreams of coming back to the homeland and making delightful dishes a la Joe.

MARVIN Raymundo

Kristine Joy Bernal

Breaks the ice

In a tropical country like the Philippines, snow is something that is impossible to happen (at least not at the moment or not until the phenomenon of global warming takes into full effect). Ice, on the other hand, can be found most of the time inside refrigerators, on a pitcher of soda, or even inside the rinks of malls. No one could ever stop a young girl from dreaming big and reaching for the gold in a field or sport where not most Filipinos are familiar of.

Kristine, 14, is definitely not a stranger to winning medals, competing in various exhibitions, and performing in front of an audience. She wins golds and silvers almost every time she competes.

Being one of the youngest and yet the tallest at ten years old, she gracefully glided her way to the top of 2002 Skate Asia ice-figure competition winning against 512 other competitors from various countries including those from China and the US.

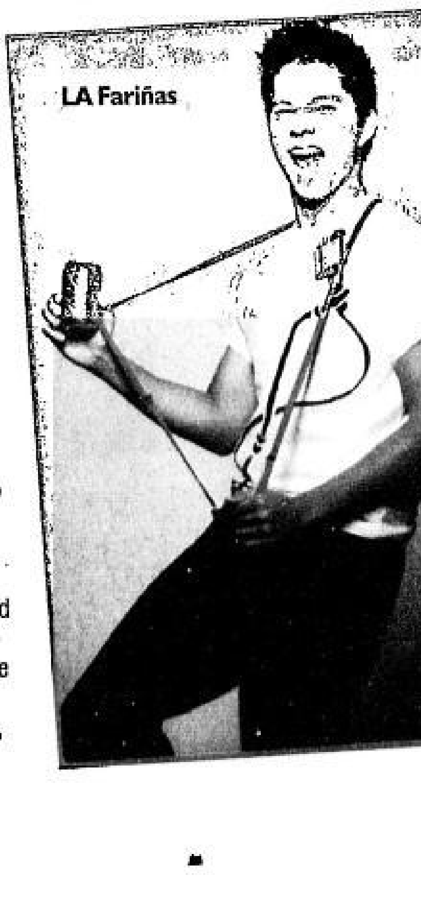
LA Fariñas

Liquid warrior

Water events seem all fun and thrilling, but these can get nasty especially if these already involve tussling and wrestling. Talk about World Wrestling Federation (WWF) only inside a swimming pool, while wearing only a headgear and skimpy trunks.

LA considers himself at his best element while playing the sport. Being part of the water polo national team, he regularly trains and competes in and out of the country.

When not in the pool, LA is busy with school as a sophomore Computer Applications student at De La Salle's College of St. Benilde. With academics and sports sometimes getting in the way of one another, LA maintains that he strives to be good at both.



LA Fariñas

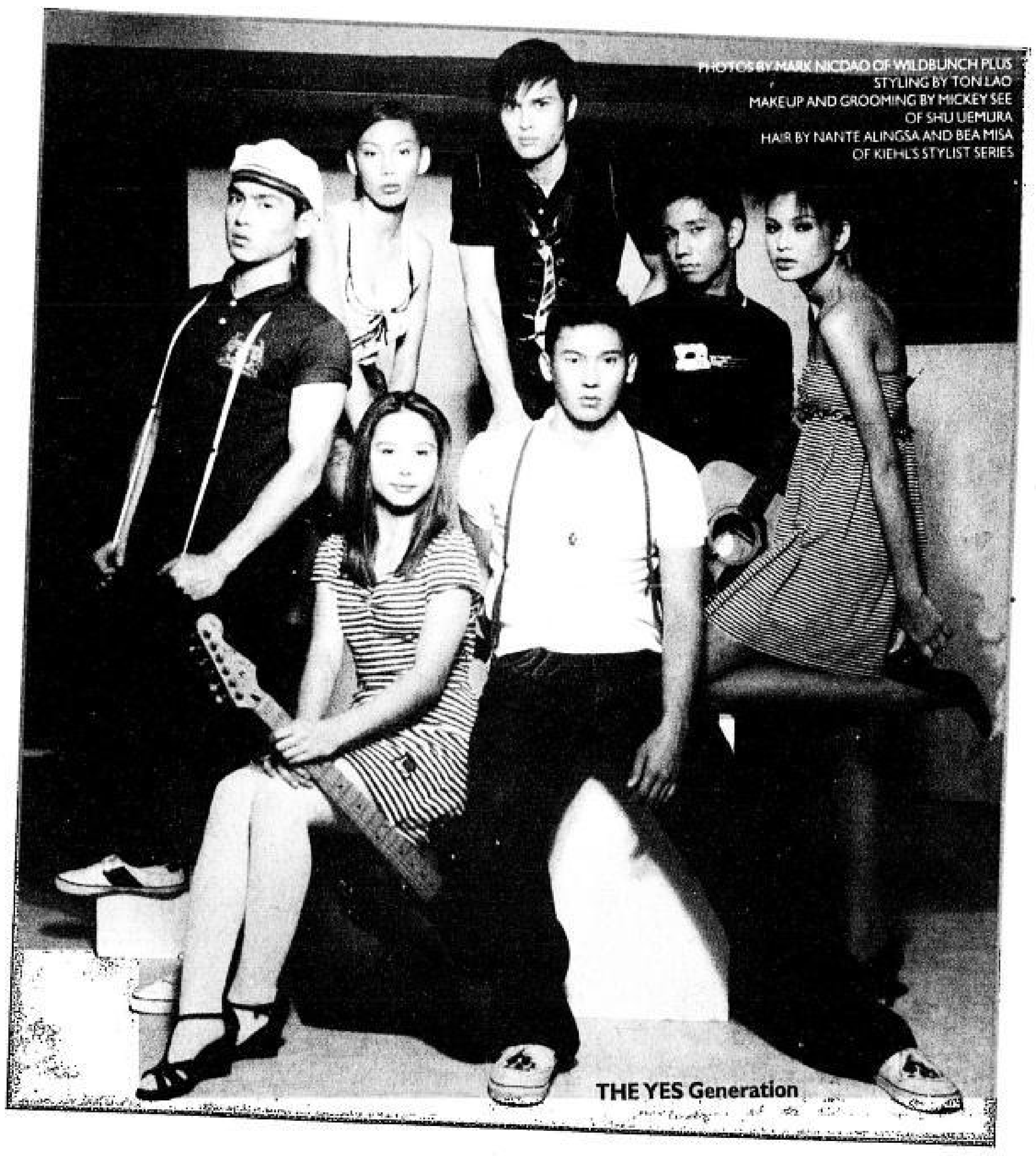
Kim Ross delos Santos

Model unit

Beauty, glam and everything aesthetic all matter in the world of modeling. Notorious catwalk models like Tyra and Naomi may now find a new protégé in the body of the 2005 Elite Model Look Philippines runaway winner, Kim.

At seventeen, her colleagues already may consider her a pro. This has been proven when she bested 25 other local candidates at the Elite Model Look competition in 2005. She went on to compete in Shanghai, China where she learned the essentials of what it takes to be a real model.

Kim took a chance and pursued her dream. There was no turning back for this statuesque beauty. At the present, she is one of the country's most in-demand personalities gracing the pages of top magazines and broadsheets. Furthermore, her strut is undeniably being recognized now in the runway. This girl can surely go from high fashion, street wear to wearable couture.



PHOTOS BY MARK NICDAO OF WILDBUNCH PLUS
STYLING BY TON LAO
MAKEUP AND GROOMING BY MICKEY SEE OF SHU UEMURA
HAIR BY NANTE ALINGSA AND BEA MISA OF KIEHL'S STYLIST SERIES

THE YES Generation

Marvin Raymundo

Screen saver

"I was on board Star Cruise's Superstar Gemini when Direk Edgar "Bobot" Mortiz first spotted me and asked whether I can guest in his show "Let's Go!," television's newest and hottest model/actor, Marvin Raymundo says. "I then readily agreed. Why not?"

That one instance, where Marvin just grabbed the opportunity proved to be a life-changing move. Another top caliber director, Direk Gilbert Perez, has put him in ABS-CBN's sineserye, "May Minamahal."

"I really wanted to be in show business. I heard it's tough out there. But I am here to prove and challenge myself to become a real star," he says with full enthusiasm.

Currently, Marvin is part of Star Magic Batch 15 and is regularly appearing in several TV commercials.

These young hopefuls have said yes in spite of serious obstacles. With determination, passion, and focus, they have pursued their dreams. Coca-cola fully supports today's generation of achievers.

KIM ROSS delos Santos

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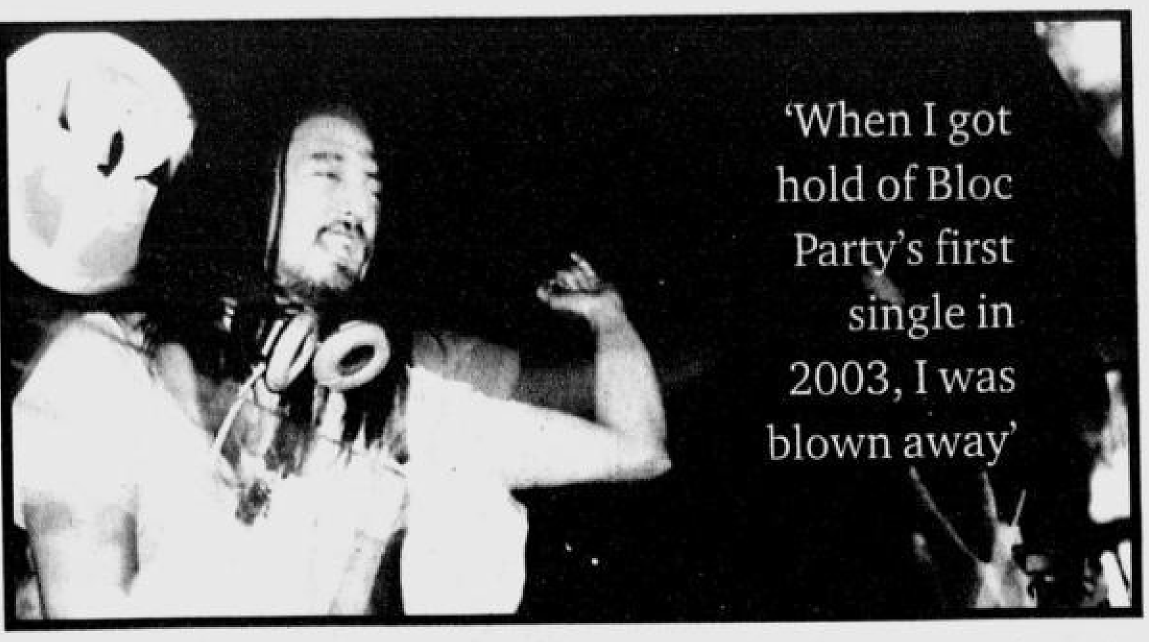
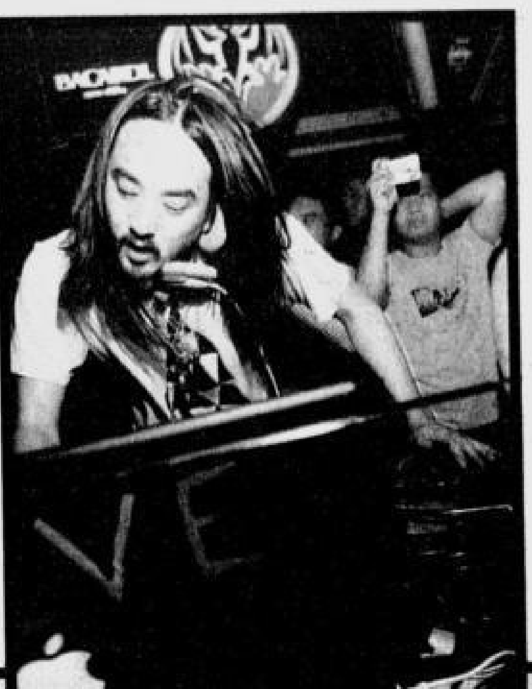


'When I got hold of Bloc Party's first single in 2003, I was blown away'



NO KIDDING. The Kid Millionaire gets into serious action

CROWD-SURFER. Dropping a bomb of electro Nu Wave beats at Embassy Super Club

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It's the same way I feel about bands. When I got hold of Bloc Party's first single in 2003, I was blown away.

And The Kills?

When I first heard The Kills, I got the exact same feeling. In fact, it was at that point when I decided to drop my graduate school plans. I was done with my GREs, I got accepted into two colleges with scholarships, I had a 3.8 GPA, and I was a Women's Studies and Sociology major. My whole plan was to become a professor and do research. Then I heard The Kills demo, and I was like f*** all this shit. I'm going to take the blue bill.

I guess going with your gut paid off.

If you produce something of quality that's special to you, other people will see it. With Dim Mak, I sign in bands not because I think they'll sell a lot of records. I sign bands because I find something unique and special in them. If they generate that kind of feeling in me, I feel that if I push them and get behind them, they can do the same thing for somebody else.

Now, on a lighter note. What's up with you and Lindsay Lohan?

She's a really cool girl. I consider her a really good friend—and a pretty decent DJ at that.

C2 Life!

2 wake up.
2 run.
2 explore.
2 find friends and 2 share.
2 think.
2 want.
2 dare.
2 hold someone's hand.
2 reach out for one's dream.
2 be free.
2 be in love.
2 be better than before.
2 know what's good.
2 drink what's green.
2 live cool.
2 live clean.

That's the C2 Life!

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Out on a Limbo

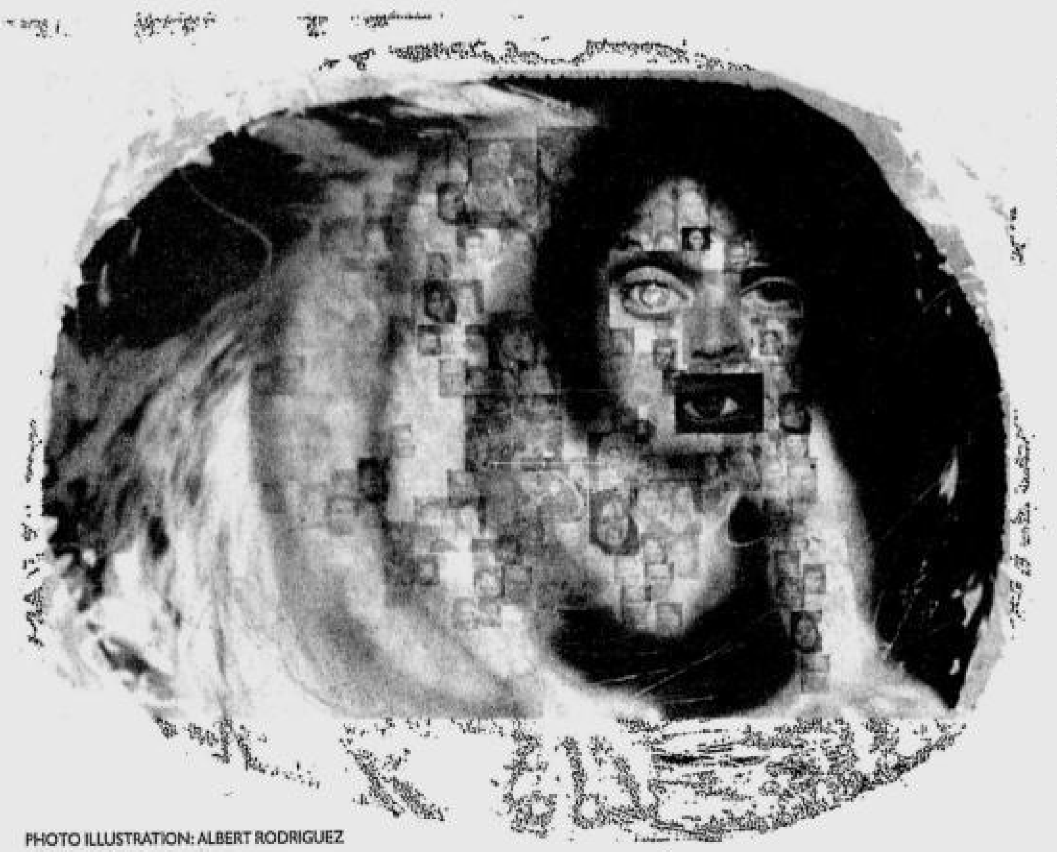


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

When bogged down by too much air traffic in life, it may be reassuring to know that you can still find direction by getting a little lost in space. Float around for a while to see where you should finally land and hit the ground running

By Katrina A. Holigores

I THINK I CAN BE GUILTY MOST times of being an emotional fence sitter, racking up mileage points to and from my trips to limbo. It was easier earlier on in life, using pure idealism to propel me forward in making decisions, the world, being black and white through a teenager's eyes was so much easier to make my oyster, or at least I thought. Adulthood and coming to terms with emotional upheavals slowly brought in more color, and definitely more static. So, finding clarity when lost in a feelings fog can make one reluctant to leave the limbo terminal. Not knowing the beginning or the end of what you're going through can sometimes be extremely peaceful, as paradoxical as that sounds, it's like being a permanent resident of Switzerland during the World War. It's a neither here nor there Neverneverland and numbs the pain of having to choose one over the other. Ignorance is bliss, and limbo is bliss at its best.

There are of course, advantages and major disadvantages of being in this state. One thing that could be considered a pro is that it actually gives you some time to think and reflect. Honestly, like when you are unsure if your flight is leaving on time or is delayed you then surrender to the fact that you have to sit down or walk around lost in as many distractions as you can possible come up with. In come the scenarios swimming in your head, all the possible wonderful endings and all the disastrous ones, in fact, it becomes a mental Choose Your Own Adventure, and the best part about it is that the ending can change over and over again. That's the fun part about being in limbo (OK, fun is relative) you allow yourself a certain amount of detachment in order to play and replay scenes from your life and permit yourself to rebook your destination, if at least, in an imaginary outcome atlas, with no hidden fees and surcharges. You become audience to your drama, so in that aspect, limbo rocks.

Another plus about limbo is that it allows reassessment, and for some, the chance to be vulnerable. Vulnerability is often scowled upon as a weakness, when the truth be told, showing vulnerability gives others a chance to help, when they would normally be turned away out of pride. There is no shame in admitting you need help, no one is expected to be strong day in and day out, and when the winds of confusion set in leaving us helpless in the hands of what we cannot control then humility takes over as well. We then learn that although we have to make decisions on our own, there are many around us who will help us 'til it's time for that decision to be made, who act as support, sounding boards, sometimes even a shoulder to cry on or an understanding ear. We all crave definition in everything from our TV sets to our own lives but first we have to surf through our experiential channels in order to get the best reception, and this takes time. Limbo gives us a timeout and eventually a way out.

So on your way to destination definition, enjoy a couple of stopovers in limboland.

Simple lang
pledge for the planet

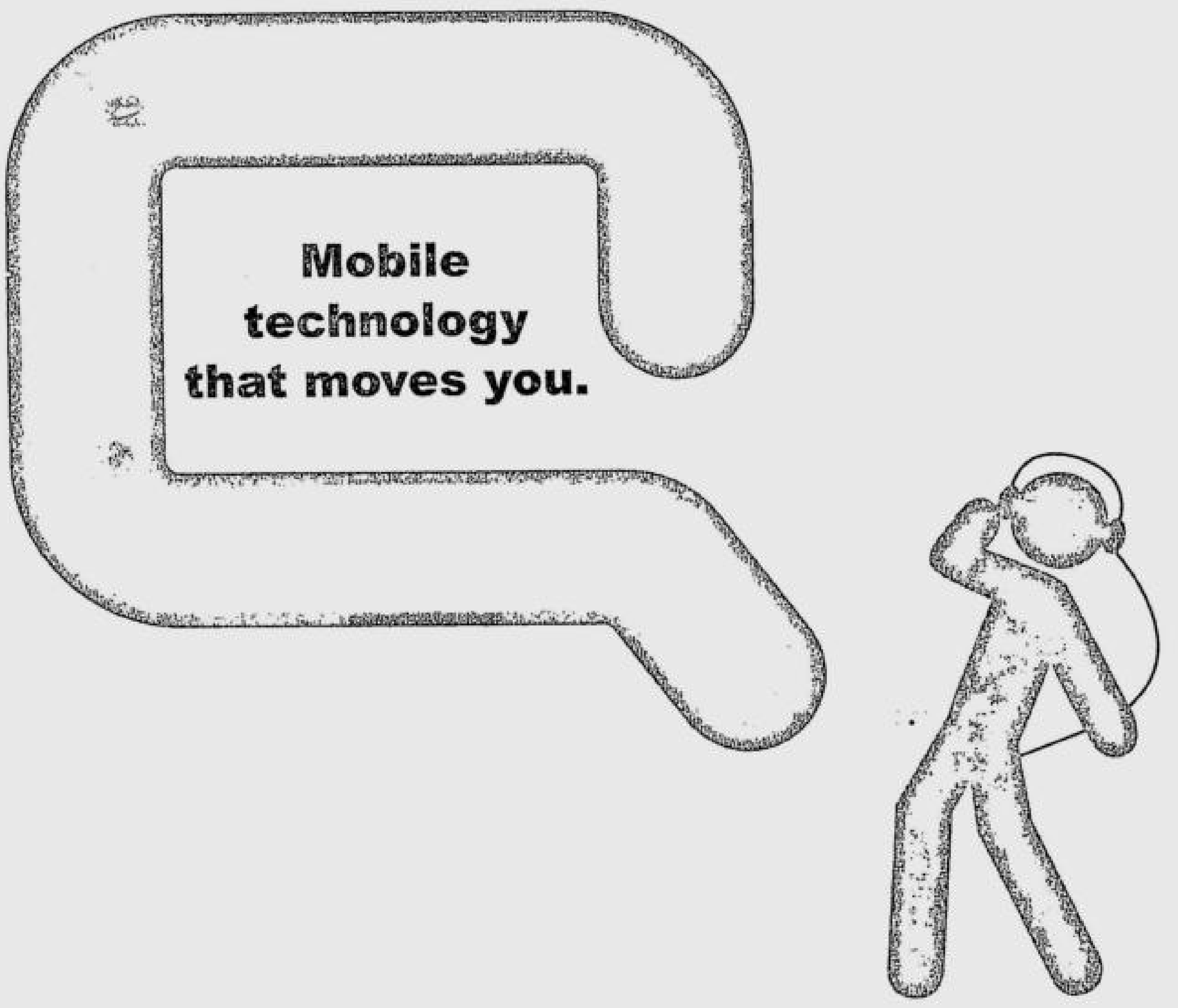
Get unplugged!

BE A FRIEND of the Earth! Greenpeace recently launched their local campaign "Simple Lang" with the message of conserving energy. Leaving machines plugged even if they're switched off still uses up power. So unplug your cell phone charger after you've fully powered up. Also remember to remove the TV plug from the socket when you're not channel surfing. It's really quite simple!

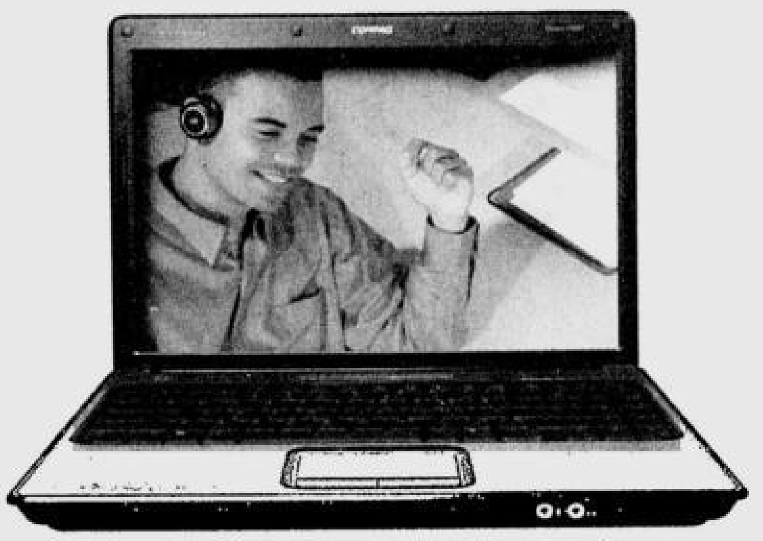
Cultivate your green mind. Log on to www.greenpeace.org.ph/simplelang or text ONGREENPEACE to 2948 for more info on how you can help conserve energy.

Compaq recommends Windows Vista® Home Premium.

intel Centrino Duo Core 2 Duo inside



Mobile technology that moves you.



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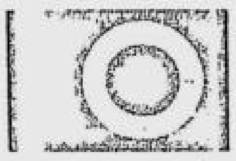

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Call us the blog police

We at Super love how blogs have exploded. We love it even more when blogs are well written. To encourage better blog writing, we will spend time online looking for the best blog entries that we can lift and publish in our pages. If you think your entries are print-worthy and we're taking too long in making our way to your blog, send smoke signals to super@inquirer.com.ph.

SUPERFRESH

Blog Patrol

By Ruby de Vera

An Open Letter to the Concerned Family and Friends of Thirty-something Single Women*

Dear CFF,

THIS LETTER AIMS TO ADDRESS SEVERAL areas that have been brought to our attention repeatedly, i.e. every occasion that requires people to bring their significant others and we turn up alone and dateless. While we appreciate your well-meant comments about the state of our ovaries, please take a moment to hear our side.

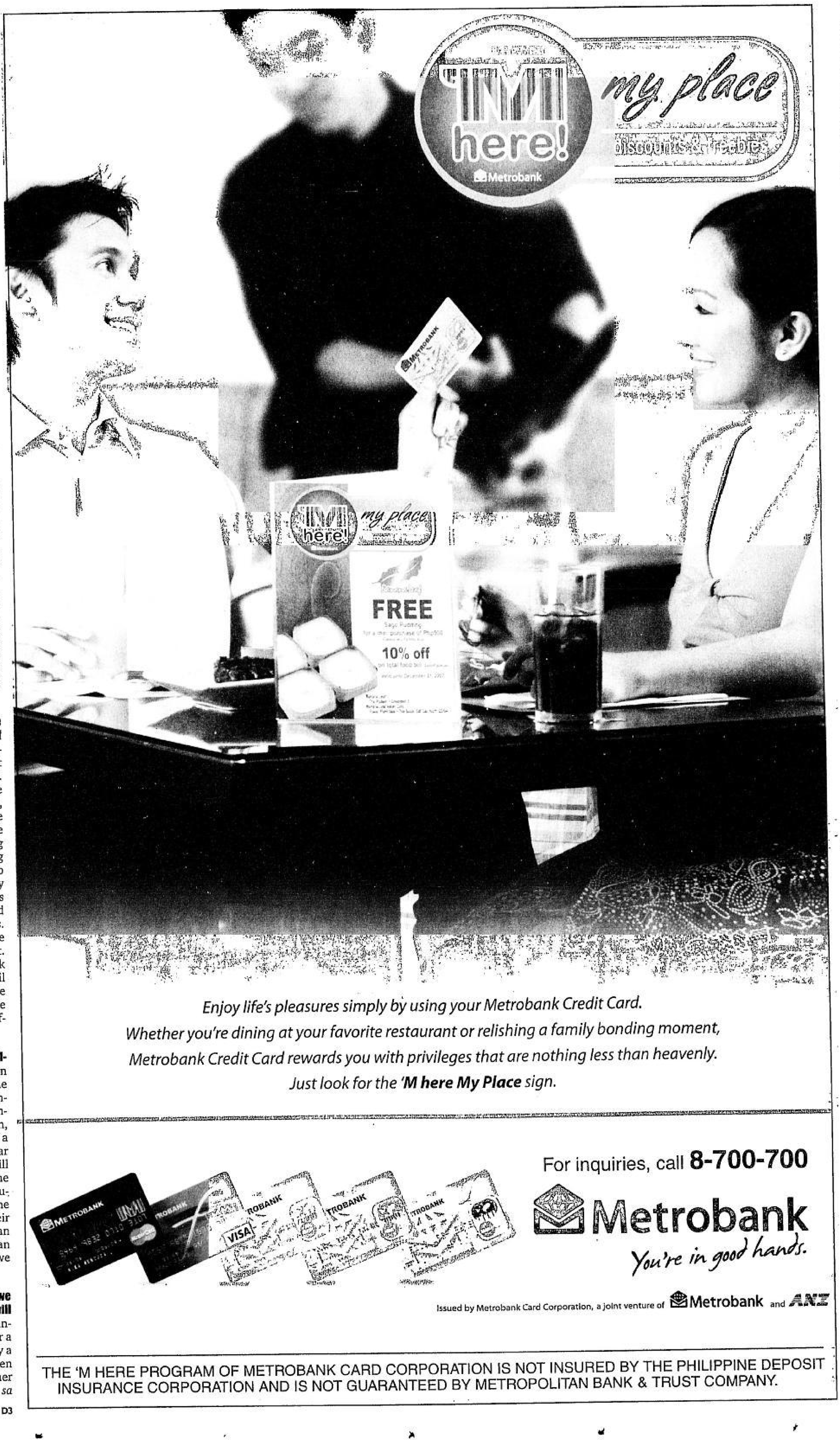
1 **We are not unhappy.** Where you got the idea that single women mope around whining about the fact that they don't have someone, we will never know. We try to live our lives as best as we can, and I think we're doing good. Most of us are professionals successful in our respective fields, independent, smart, well-traveled, and knowledgeable about a lot of things. While it might appear that we are obsessed (and sometimes we are) about our Jo Malones, Lampe Bergers, Havaianas, gadgets and such, we are not compensating the lack of a man's presence in our lives by being materialistic. We can afford what we obsess about anyway, with our own hard-earned money.

2 **We don't envy married people, and we have reason to believe that some of them envy us and our lifestyles.** Judging from statistics, couples are more caught up in the wedding than the marriage itself. True, there are many couples who are the best fit for each other (hurray for you guys), but how many marriages dissolve before they reach their tenth anniversary? I have lost count of newlywed girl friends advising her single friends not to rush it, and coming from someone who's married for only two months, that's a little scary. Take somebody who's been married for more than 10 years and ask him/her straight if they're truly and deeply happy inside out with their lives. Chances are they will say, "Yes, because we have kids." Which is the biggest bullshit. Marriage is about two people who rock each other's world, and working at it until one partner's breathing stops. Children are just a bonus. A good marriage should be able to work even without producing offspring.

3 **That brings us to another thing, children.** Yes, we are aware that women have biological clocks, that past the age of 35 it would be rather difficult to conceive, blah blah blah. Contrary to the winning answer to a beauty pageant question, having children is not the end-all be-all of a woman. What about those who cannot bear a child because of nature's bad joke? Will she lose her life's meaning just because she can't bring another life into this overpopulated world? While we acknowledge the fact that children do bring meaning to their parent's lives (see Doodle, Abbey), we can be mothers to children not our own. It can be our own nieces and nephews, or kids we haven't even met yet (see World Vision).

4 **We don't subscribe to the crap that we have to have children so someone will take care of us in our old age.** It's unfair to the child, that he's brought here for a purpose. I once saw on a TV documentary a couple who has 21 children, and when asked why do they have so many, the father answered "*Isa dyan ang mag-aahon sa*

BLOG/ D3



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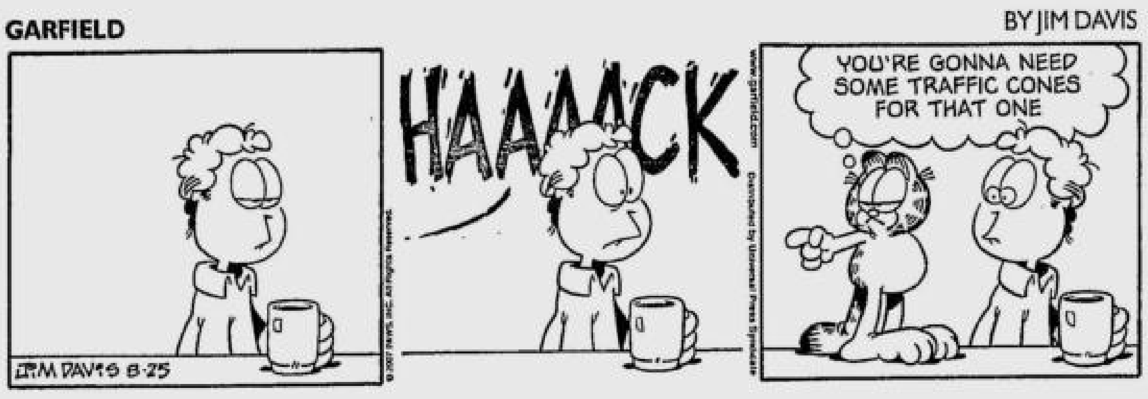
COMICRelief

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2007

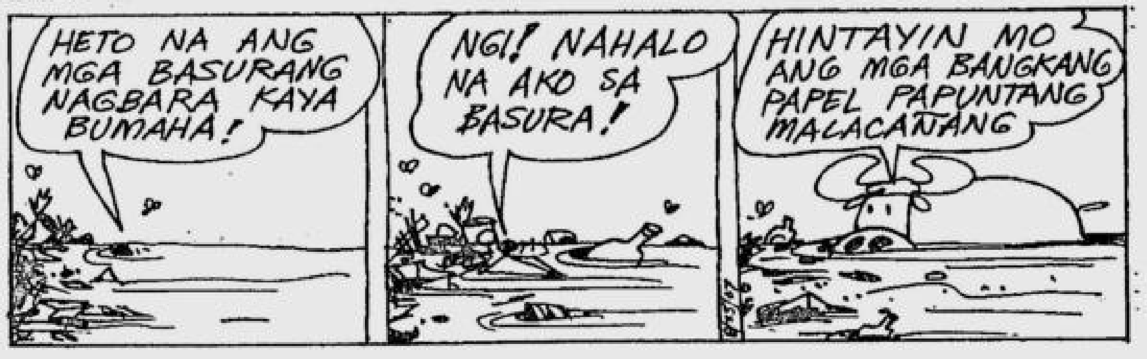
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


HAAACK
YOU'RE GONNA NEED SOME TRAFFIC CONES FOR THAT ONE
JIM DAVIS 8-25

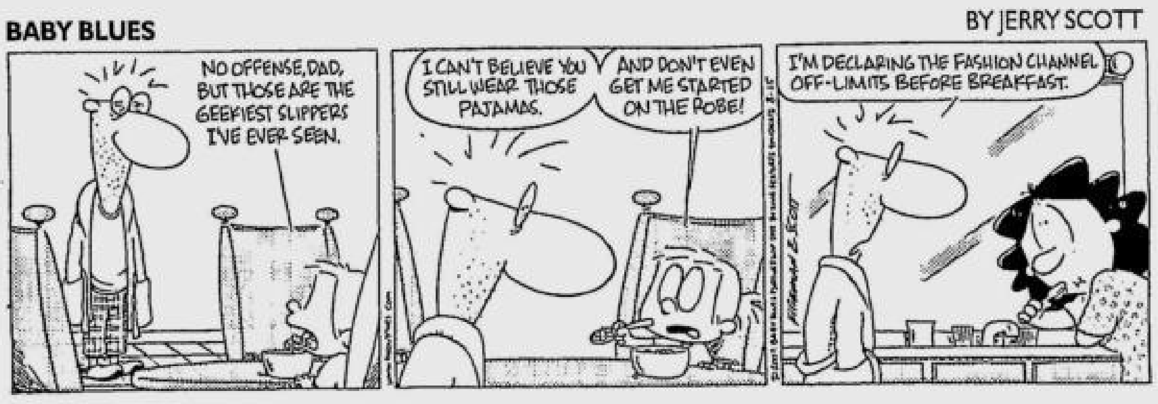
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HETO NA ANG MGA BASURANG NAGBARA KAYA BUMAHA!
NGI! NAHALO NA AKO SA BASURA!
HINTAYIN MO ANG MGA BANGKANG PAPEL PAPUNTANG MALACAÑANG

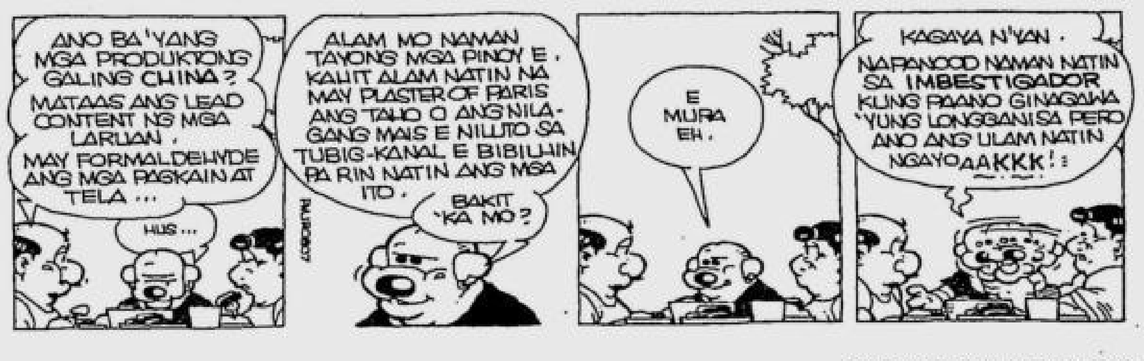
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


NO OFFENSE, DAD, BUT THOSE ARE THE GEEKIEST SLIPPERS I'VE EVER SEEN.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU STILL WEAR THOSE PAJAMAS.
AND DON'T EVEN GET ME STARTED ON THE ROBE!
I'M DECLARING THE FASHION CHANNEL OFF-LIMITS BEFORE BREAKFAST.

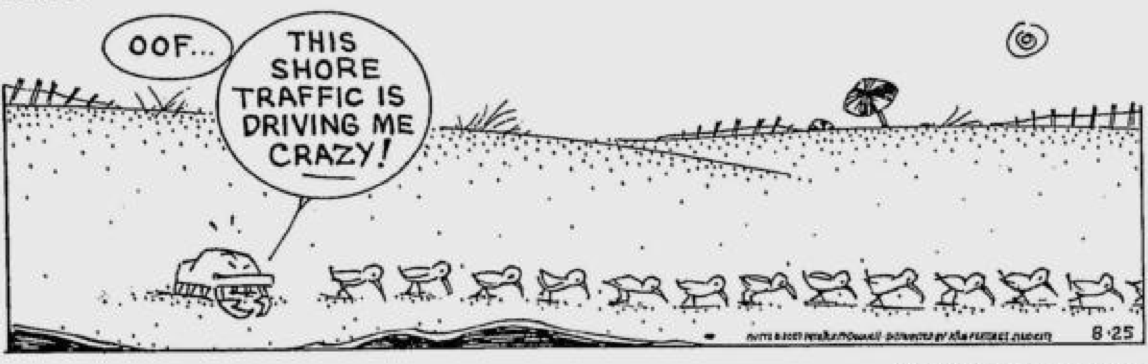
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO BA 'YANG MGA PRODUKTONG GALING CHINA?
MATAAS ANG LEAD CONTENT NG MGA LARUAN.
MAY FORMALDEHYDE ANG MGA PASKAIN AT TELA ...
HUS ...
ALAM MO NAMAN TAYONG MGA PINOY E. KAHIT ALAM NATIN NA MAY PLASTER OF PARIS ANG TAHO O ANG NILAGANG MAIS E NILUTO SA TUBIG-KANAL E BIBILHIN PA RIN NATIN ANG MGA ITO.
BAKIT 'KA MO?
E MURA EH.
KAGAYA N'YAN. NAPANOOD NAMAN NATIN SA IMBESTIGADOR KUNG PAANO GINAGAWA 'YUNG LONGGANISA PERO ANO ANG ULAM NATIN NGAYO AAKKK!

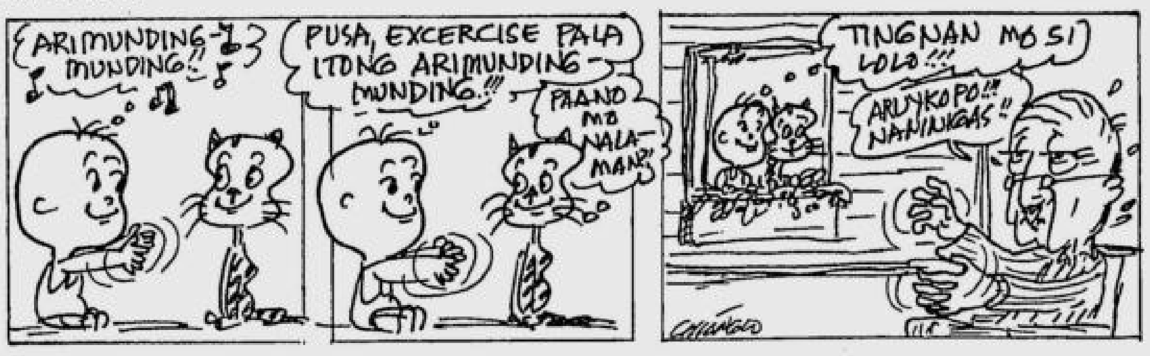
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OOF...
THIS SHORE TRAFFIC IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!
8-25

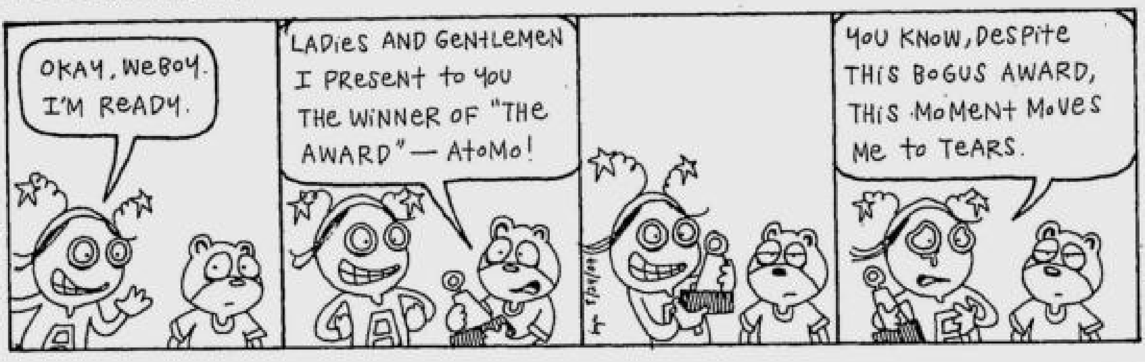
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ARIMUNDING-MUNDING!!
PUSA, EXCERCISE PALA ITONG ARIMUNDING-MUNDING!!!
PAANO MO NALAMAN?
TINGNAN MO SI LOLO!!!
ARUYKOPO!! NANINIGAS!!
CHIONGLO

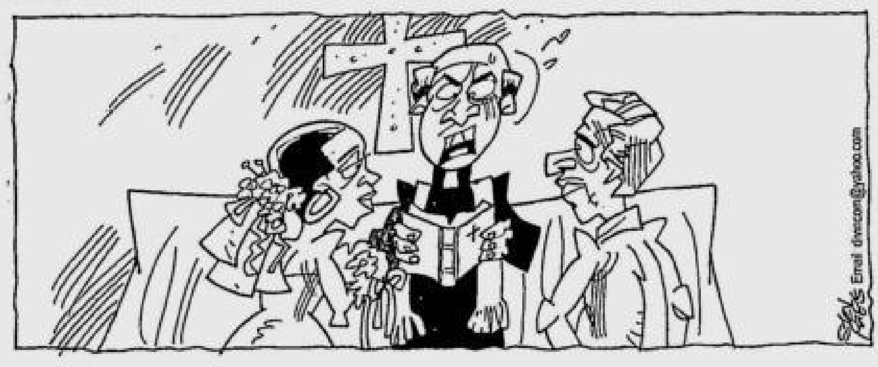
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARĊELLANO


OKAY, WeBoY. I'M ReADY.
LADieS AND GeNtLeMeN I PReSeNt to YoU THe WiNNeR OF "THE AWARD" — AtoMo!
YoU KNoW, DeSPite THiS BoGUS AWARD, THiS MoMeNt MoVeS Me to TeARS.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


Email: divcom@yahoo.com

BAKIT GALIT ANG PROTESTANT MINISTER NA NASA PICTURE?

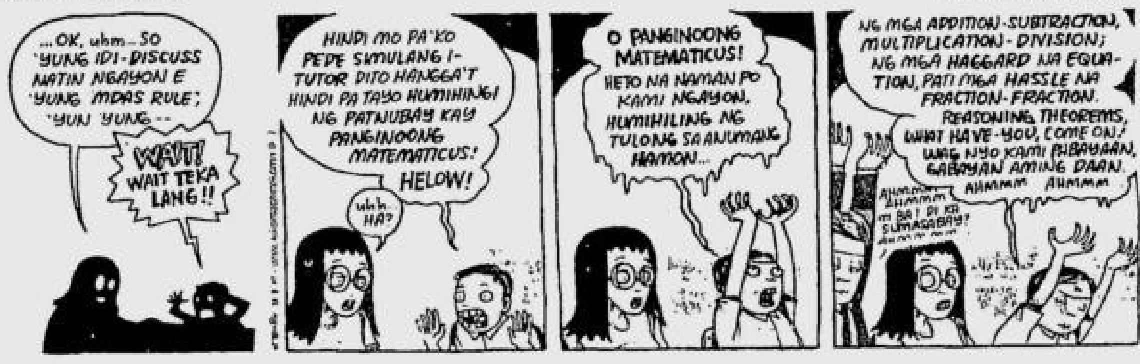
A) MASIKIP ANG ECCLESIASTICAL COLLAR NYA

B) HINDI NYA MABASA ANG LETTERS SA PRAYER BOOK NYA

C) ANAK NYA YUNG BABAE NA KINAKASAL

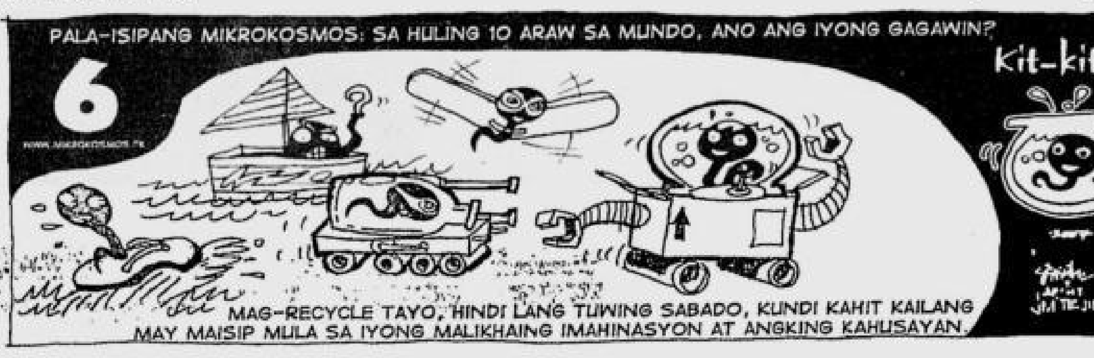
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...OK, uhm...SO 'YUNG IDI-DISCUSS NATIN NGAYON E 'YUNG MDAS RULE; 'YUN YUNG--
WAIT! WAIT TEKA LANG!!
HINDI MO PA'KO PEDE SIMULANG I-TUTOR DITO HANGGA'T HINDI PA TAYO HUMIHINGI NG PATNUBAY KAY PANGINOONG MATEMATICUS!
HELOW!
uhh... HA?
O PANGINOONG MATEMATICUS! HETO NA NAMAN PO KAMI NGAYON, HUMIHILING NG TULONG SA ANUMANG HAMON...
NG MGA ADDITION-SUBTRACTION, MULTIPLICATION-DIVISION; NG MGA HAGGARD NA EQUATION, PATI MGA HASSLE NA FRACTION-FRACTION. REASONING, THEOREMS, WHAT HAVE-YOU, COME ON! WAG NYO KAMI PABAYAAN, GABAYAN AMING DAAN. AHMMM AHMMM
AHMMM AHMMM
BA'I DI KA SUMASABAY?

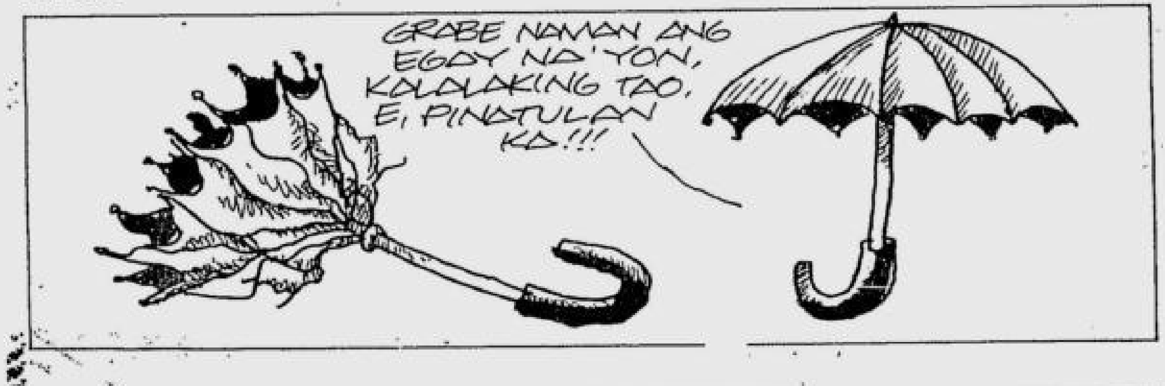
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PALA-ISIPANG MIKROKOSMOS: SA HULING 10 ARAW SA MUNDO, ANO ANG IYONG GAGAWIN?
6
Kit-kit
MAG-RECYCLE TAYO, HINDI LANG TUWING SABADO, KUNDI KAHIT KAILANG MAY MAISIP MULA SA IYONG MALIKHAING IMAHINASYON AT ANGKING KAHUSAYAN.

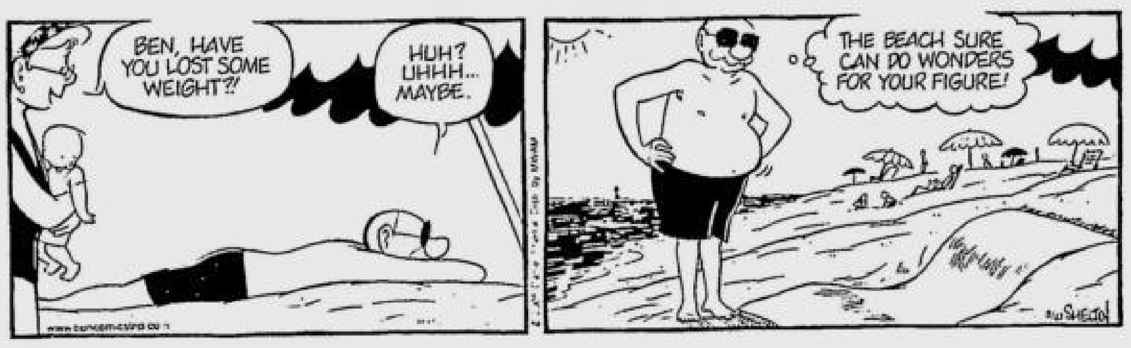
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

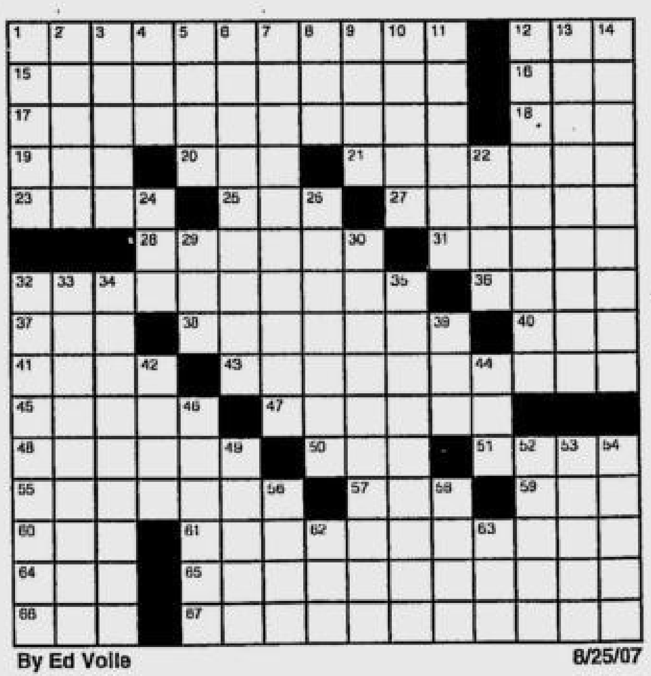

GRABE NAMAN ANG EGAY NA'YON, KOLALAKING TAO, E, PINATULAN KA!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN, HAVE YOU LOST SOME WEIGHT?!
HUH? UHHH... MAYBE.
THE BEACH SURE CAN DO WONDERS FOR YOUR FIGURE!
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Ed Voile
Gillette, WY

8/25/07

ACROSS

1 Being subtle intentionally
12 Pt. of speech
15 Guilty party
16 Hindu title
17 Quarternary Period epoch
18 Heavy-hearted
19 Old-time high note
20 TV oldie, "__ Ramsey"
21 Measure again precisely
23 __ avis
25 Work wk. start
27 Trinidad's neighbor
28 Peke or pom
31 Change the alarm
32 Rival
36 Facet
37 Ms. Gardner
38 Associated
40 __ populi
41 Take an IOU
43 Period in custody
45 Coffee lightener
47 Lagerlof and Diamond
48 Nation of Roma
50 Bro or sis
51 Inarticulate grunts
55 Waltzing lady
57 Greek letters
59 Sm. battery size
60 DDE
61 "The Flying Deuces" co-star
64 Saul's uncle
65 Weather balloon instruments
66 Double curve
67 "Parenthood" co-star

DOWN

1 Higher of two
2 "Gianni Schicchi" role
3 Joyless, poetically
4 Center starter?
5 Hebrew letter
6 Tried
7 Aquatic predators
8 Tic-toe tie
9 Roman way
10 Composition for nine
11 Botanist Mendel
12 Soothing
13 Continued tediously
14 Closed caption system
22 Fortas and Vigoda
24 Mont Blanc, e.g.
26 Writes music
29 __ Lingus (Irish airline)
30 Advanced a trace
32 Whitewash
33 Catches and passes
34 Cannibals
35 Pay back
39 Genetic stuff
42 "The Persistence of Memory" painter
44 E. Lansing sch.
46 Peer's address
49 '50s candidate Stevenson
52 Avant-__
53 Netherworld
54 Speak, archaically
56 Verdi classic
58 Public exhibition
62 French wine
63 Tropical black cuckoo

Friday's Puzzle Solved

W	E	B	M	D	■	F	R	E	Q	■	T	H	E	N
A	L	I	C	E	■	R	A	G	U	■	R	O	X	Y
T	O	L	L	B	R	I	D	G	E	■	I	S	E	E
T	I	A	■	B	E	S	■	S	U	S	P	E	C	T
■	■	T	A	I	L	E	D	■	E	C	L	A	S	S
C	H	E	N	E	Y	■	E	N	S	U	E	■	■	■
H	A	R	K	■	O	D	A	Y	■	D	C	C	A	B
E	L	A	L	■	N	O	R	S	E	■	R	E	M	O
R	O	L	E	X	■	M	E	E	T	■	O	L	I	N
■	■	■	B	O	W	E	S	■	A	D	W	E	E	K
A	C	C	R	U	E	■	T	A	L	O	N	S	■	■
C	U	R	A	T	E	S	■	B	I	L	■	T	I	E
I	R	O	C	■	P	I	E	F	I	L	L	I	N	G
D	I	C	E	■	E	L	B	A	■	O	S	A	G	E
S	A	K	S	■	R	O	B	B	■	P	U	L	E	R

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8/25/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fast, restless mind. You love new, exciting ideas. You immediately analyze your current situation; and you constantly seek ways to improve things. Your talent for speech and writing makes you charming and diplomatic. You're also highly persuasive! As you age, your creative abilities grow. The year ahead favors all social situations, especially relationships. Enjoy!

Birthdate of: Elvis Costello, musician; Rachael Ray, TV cook; Sean Connery, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Unrealistic ideals and expectations could lead to disappointment with loved ones, especially romantic partners or children. You have to work to stay in the real world today. Don't expect too much from others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Don't go overboard spending money on beautiful things for your home or a family member today. Generosity is a good thing; just don't get carried away!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The confusion of the past few days might lead to some serious disappointment today. Be realistic in your expectations of siblings and relatives. (We are all frail mortals.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might be disappointed in your earnings, or in some financial situation today. Perhaps something costs more than you thought it would. This has been a confusing week!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Unexpressed expectations almost always lead to disappointment. Try to cut your partner or a close friend some slack, even though you feel let down in some way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): If you feel concerned for someone who has less than you, try to do something to help. Even a kind word or a sympathetic attitude could make a big difference.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): In your friendships with others, you have real needs too. It's OK to please others, but remember to please yourself as well.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You might be confused when dealing with bosses, parents and VIPs today. Make sure you know what others expect from you. If you're not sure, ask.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Travel plans or something having to do with education could look more promising than it actually is. Personally, your idealism is aroused today, along with your appreciation of beauty.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This entire week has been subject to confusion about shared property or your responsibilities for others. Don't be a martyr. It's important to stand up for yourself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Relationships with others could be disappointing today. But they might be disappointed too. Wait a day or two to discuss things. (Today there's too much confusion.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You've been working hard lately, but today you might feel disappointed in your job. This will pass. Don't beat yourself up about anything. Just do your best, because that's all anyone can do.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

8			5	1				7
	1		3				2	
4								3
							8	2
6				7				4
3	2							
7								6
	6				8		1	
9				3	7			5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

8/25

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	6	9	3	1	5	2	8	4
1	5	2	7	4	8	6	9	3
3	8	4	9	6	2	7	1	5
8	1	5	6	2	3	4	7	9
2	7	6	4	5	9	1	3	8
4	9	3	8	7	1	5	6	2
6	2	8	1	3	4	9	5	7
9	4	7	5	8	6	3	2	1
5	3	1	2	9	7	8	4	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Kjwan, Rubber Inc. and Super Pinoy power

By Janine Cuenca-Dario and Paolo R. Reyes

TWO WEEKS AGO, FILIPINOS swept the Asean Ikon, a regional music competition in Malaysia through singer Vina Morales and rock band Kjwan, the country's representatives in the solo and band categories.

24/7 also got wind of the news about electronic local artists Rubber Inc.'s acclaimed performance at a music festival in Germany. Composed of Malek Lopez and Noel de Brackinghe, the talented duo has been collaborating on a musical project with the Berlin-based DJ brothers, Andi and Hannes Teichmann. Next month, the Teichmann Brothers are coming to town for the Manila leg of "Soundscapes: Electronic Music in Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand," a unique music project that spans nine cities.

It all began last year, when top German DJ Hans Nieswandt visited nine cities in the region, scouting for talent, uncovering regional trends, and meeting with local artists while playing special gigs along the way. Upon his return to Germany, Nieswandt selected one artist per country to participate in the second installment of his ambitious project: A collaboration between his chosen artists and German DJs.

As the Philippine representatives, Rubber Inc. was sent by Goethe-Institut Manila to perform at the C/O Pop Festival in Cologne, Germany last August. There, they were introduced to the Teichmann Brothers, the German artists selected to collaborate with them. Apart from being awarded the 2002 Culture Prize for their long lasting contributions to the youth culture of the Regensburg, Germany, they run their own record label, Festplatten, and have released internationally acclaimed labels such as "Kompakt" or "Lage dor."

This September, the brothers will visit the country to work on new tracks with Rubber Inc. You can catch them at The Loft in Cebu City on Sept. 1, Nuvo in Greebelt 2 on Sept. 8, and at Warehouse 135 on Sept. 8, where they will also be holding a workshop. Call 817 0978 or visit www.goethe.de/manila and www.goethe.de/electronic-music.

> Pinoy acts are doing us proud in the international music scene

More Super! 24/7 events:

Aug. 25, Saturday

The CompanY at Captain's Bar; Noel Cabangon at 70s Bistro; Deep Down & Discofied w/ DJs Karl Ty & Marie Garcia at Fiamma; Rouge w/ DJ Red-I & Soul Flowa at M Café ; BluRoom at Martinis Bar; Sexy Saturdays at Absinth; DJs Jon Herrera & Tolo Bote at Temple; Savage Saturdays at Bed

Aug. 26, Sunday

Amorsolo Retrospective at UP Vargas Museum; Nuevo Ritmo at Café Havana Greenbelt

Aug. 27, Monday

Happy Mondays w/ Borgy Manotoc at Embassy Cuisine; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt; I Don't Like Mondays! w/ DJ RO at Gweilos Makati

Aug. 28, Tuesday

SPIT at Mag:net Café (High Street); Sparkle w/ DJ Patch at Absinth; Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt; Open Mic Night at Club O; Aretha & Souled Out at Merk's

Aug. 29, Wednesday

Retro Classics at Warehouse 135; House of Soul w/ DJs Benjo Marquez & Jason Soong at Fez; W Wednesdays w/ DJs Karl Ty & Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; Lush: Smooth Rn'B at Fiamma; Julianne at 70s Bistro; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt ; Merk & Friends at Merk's

Aug. 30, Thursday

Fabric: Fashion Thursdays feat. Celine Gabriel & Leica Carpo at Piedra; Cerrudo Classico w/ Bo Cerrudo at Teatrino Greenhills; Kyla at Metro Bar; Reggae Mistress at Café Havana Greenbelt; World's Fastest Open Bar at Bed; Johnoy & Kakoy at 70s Bistro; The Groove at Merk's; BluRoom at Martinis Bar

Aug. 31, Friday

Bed Bodies Night at Bed; House of Soul w/ DJ Jason Soong at Alchemy; Decadance w/ DJ Boyet Almazan at Jill's; House Sessions at Fiamma; Sparkling Electro Beats w/ DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Jive Fridays at Temple; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt

Schedules may change without prior notice. For a complete list of events, text 24/7 GIGS to 2851 (Globe) and 2951 (Smart). Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com.

Blog Patrol

From page D1

amin." To pass that burden to your children is not right, and to have kids for that sole purpose is just plain sick.

5 **We don't hate men.** We like them very much, as a matter of fact (see Trillo, Dennis; Ventimiglia, Milo; Pitt, Brad; Underwood, Blair; et al). However, we are old enough and know enough not to settle for just anybody. Most of us have had strings of failed relationships under our belts, and we have learned from them. We have done our share of compromises and sacrifices, yet we know that if one day we wake up and we don't recognize ourselves anymore, it's time to run as far away as we can from the man. We're not stupid. We'd rather be alone than to be with somebody who needs our constant assurance and coddling, then we turn our backs and they go off chasing lampposts with skirts.

6 **In line with that, don't set us up with your loser friends, or the loser sons of your friends.** We can manage to find our own dates, thank you very much. We can go to dinner with our friends instead if we don't have dates, and we can pay for it. We don't need dates to take us to fancy places, because most probably we've been there already.

7 **Don't harp about our age.** Don't keep on saying that we're of the marrying age, that at our age you already have three children. It's different now. We have so many options we're actually overwhelmed which one to take first. French or Spanish? Capoeira or Muay Thai? Bangkok or Singapore? MBA or some other degree? US, Canada, or Australia? Visa or Mastercard? Wedge or stilettos?

8 **We're not bitter.** We're not cynical. We're just grounded, sensible people who believe that if there are fairy tales and happy endings, there are also villains. We know that beauty, riches and fame are not enough to bring you happiness (see Aniston, Jennifer; Aquino, Kris; Gutierrez, Ruffa; Barretto, Gretchen; Quiambao, Miriam; et al). We believe that we should first be happy with who we are before we can be happy with someone else. We know that men will not complete us, rather they should complement us. We have to make peace with ourselves and our flaws first lest we bring that baggage into a promising relationship.

We hope that the above points are clear enough, and the next time you see us these kinds of conversation will not happen anymore:

"*Ay, kanino ka ngang anak?*" (*Kay* [parent's name] *po.*)

"*Ang laki mo na iha! Nung huli kitang makita ganito ka pa lang kalaki. Ilang taon ka na ba?*" ([Age] *po.*)

"*May asawa ka na?*" (*Wala pa ho.*)

"*Ay bakit?*"

"*O, ikaw lang? Asan ang* boyfriend *mo?*" (Wala akong boyfriend ngayon.)

"*Bakit? Naku napag-iiwanan ka na.* [Laughter]"

This is our cue to get out our AK-47s and start shooting people at random. So please, read the memo.

**Straight single women. The girls who like girls can say their own piece, and no, we don't have anything against them.*

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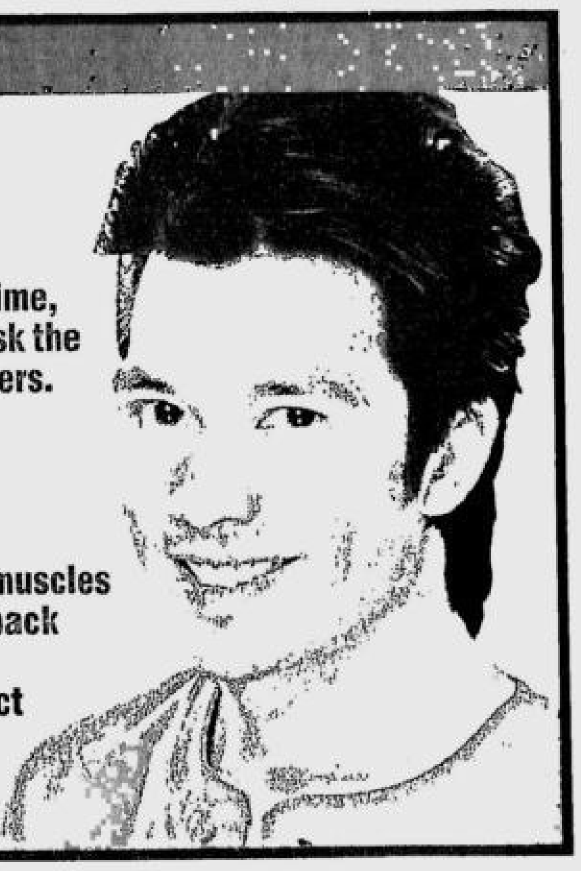


CELEBRITIES are constantly bombarded with interviews. This time, Super turns the tables on them and gives them the chance to ask the question—and we want you—yes, you—to give them the answers.

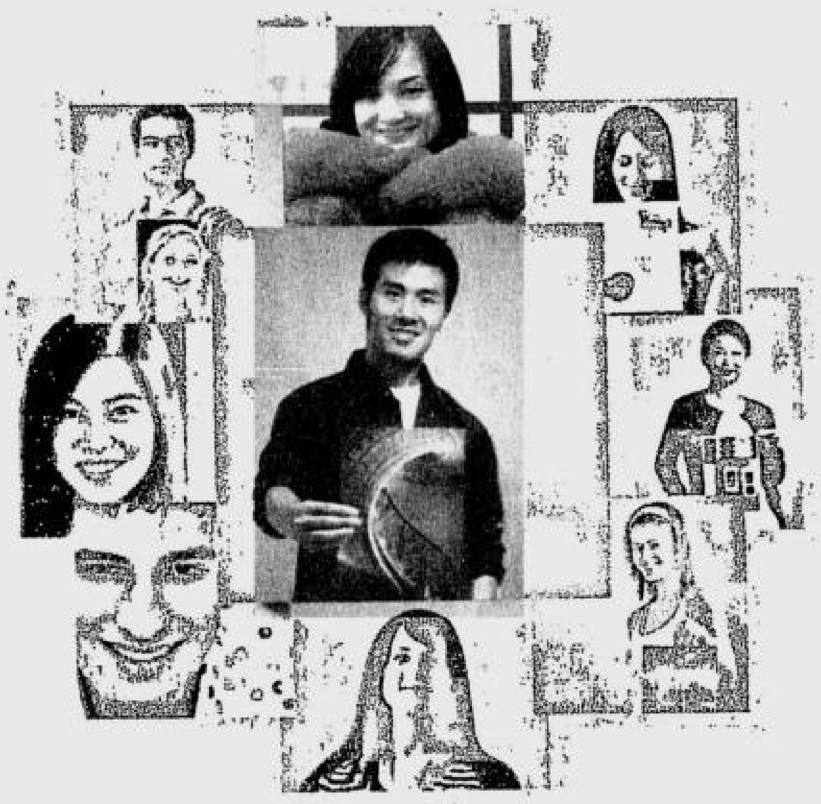
Last week, Kristine Hermosa wanted to know: 'Where can I go in Manila to find good quality material to make into clothes?'

Jana Esnobyo wrote, 'The best place for good and cheap *tela* is Kamuning. You can also try Divisoria'

This week, Diether Ocampo wants to know, 'What are the four muscles grouped together and found deeply set and underlying on the back muscle?'

E-mail your answers to super@inquirer.com.ph with the subject heading 'super answers.' Your Super answer will be printed next week.

hp



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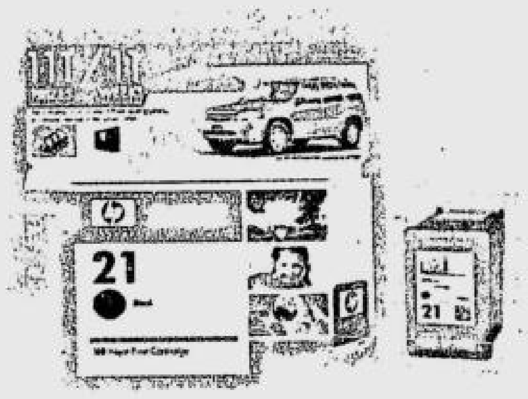

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2. Check the insert inside the ink cartridge box of the participating HP Inks (HP15, HP21, HP22, HP27, HP28, HP56 and HP78) for a specified alphanumeric serial number.
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4. After sending the entry, end user will automatically receive a confirmation text message that his/her entry has been received and officially registered.
5. There will be a weekly electronic raffle draw starting on August 25 and every Wednesday thereafter for 11 consecutive weeks.
   The following are the prizes to be given away:
   a) 100 units of iPod Shuffles;
   b) 10 units of Nokia N95 Mobile Phones; and
   c) 1 unit of Philips LCD TV.
6. Participant can only win once in the weekly raffle draws. All winning and non-winning entries in the weekly draws will automatically be included in the grand raffle draw.
7. The grand raffle draw will be on November 17, 2007, where the following prizes will be given away:
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   b) 10 units of Nokia N95 Mobile Phones;
   c) 1 unit of Philips LCD TV;
   d) 1 unit Mazda 3 4-door sedan;
   e) 1 unit Mazda 6 4-door sedan; and
   f) 1 unit Mazda Tribute SUV
8. All winners will be notified via phone call and registered mail. This includes instructions on how to claim their winnings.
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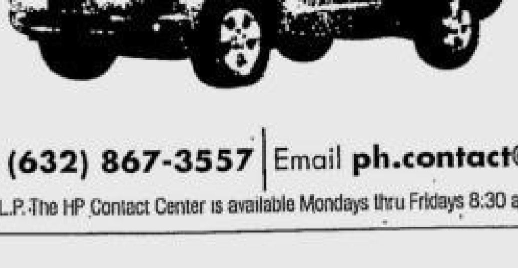

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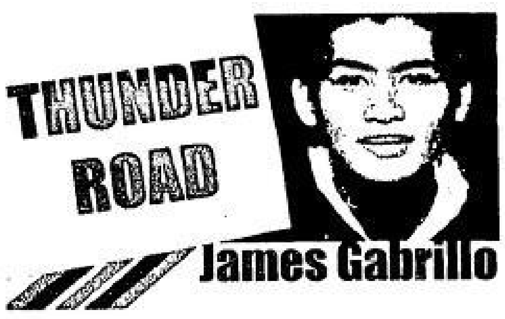
Per DTI Permit No. 2458, Series of 2007.

New blood of the Big Astana

MULTI-TASKING. The filmmaker calling the shots.

Two filmmakers started out creating crappy videos—now their visual vocabularies are choice



James Gabrillo

IT WAS NEVER AN EASY JOURNEY for this 25-year-old Filipino-American. After graduating with a Marketing degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and studying at Sevilla, Spain, Jason Joven did a few Production Assistant jobs in Chicago, then moved out to LA to be a singer-songwriter.

Realizing soon after that he "sucked," he tells me, he found a home in acting. While taking four classes a week, Jason worked part-time as a waiter and as a UPS salesman.

Yet even after getting a commercial agent, he got tired of the bad roles he would see for the Asians in Hollywood. "It's always 'can you speak broken English' or the 'foreign boyfriend.' So I realized if minorities don't step up to making their own productions, then we shouldn't complain," Jason shares.

So he read all he could about screenwriting, wrote really bad scripts in the beginning, and then started making short films. So far, he has made 10 pieces that he has written, directed and edited.

Coming into play

In the ongoing Cinemanila International Film Festival, Jason's short "Umbilical" had its world premiere. The audience loved it.

"Umbilical" is about an Asian son (played by Jason himself) who has been raised by his adoptive black mother. She's on her deathbed when the son introduces his white girlfriend to her at the hospital. The whole black-white thing comes into play, and drama ensues. The ending, however, lets one know that sometimes things aren't what they seem.

"I think nowadays, technology and population growth has forced us to face each other, differences and all. We're in each other's backyards. It causes lots of conflict, but has the potential to really move us forward as human beings. I hope my work can show at least a few people that interracial harmony, with dedication and belief, is possible," he says.

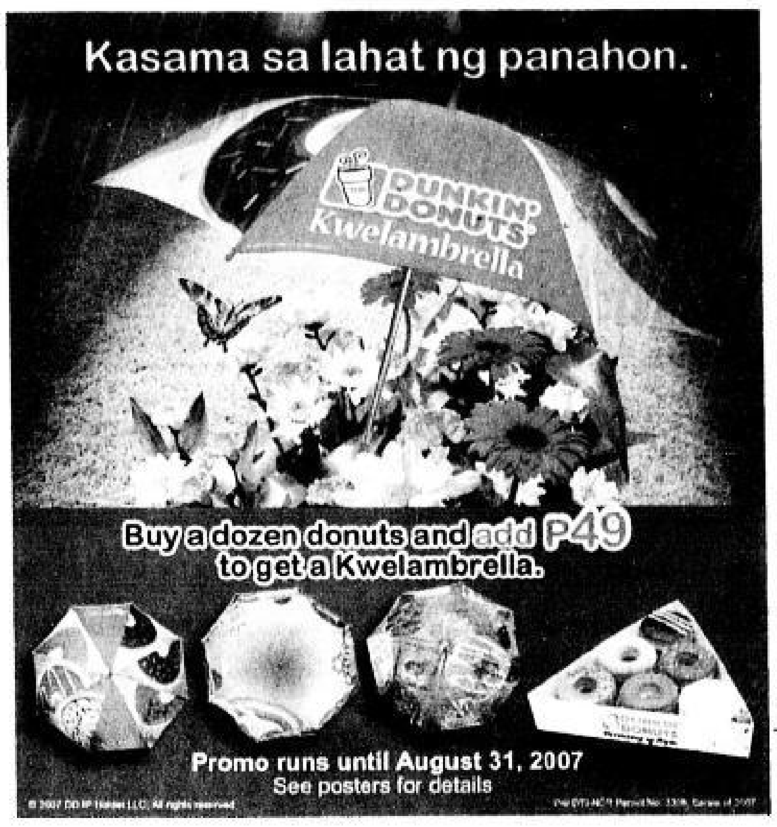
In his past year of making films, Jason tells me that he has learned about himself, and not just within the realm of films. He has learned what really interests him—sharing that he's seen, "1389 films or something." That has been his film school.

Watch, learn, then create something stellar

Jason thinks that when you watch that much cinema you treat it like a job—you just start to almost instantly know when a movie isn't to your liking, and when you're totally into it.

He recalls the things that he had to grapple with while filming: "We shot in 12 hours in one day at this abandoned hospital in downtown Los Angeles. It was actually pretty nasty. There was fake blood from all the horror productions that filmed there on the bed and walls, but sometimes my imagination took hold, and I thought, 'Man, what if someone actually died here?!' But because of our talented, professional crew, we kicked ass. We shot a whole film, lots of shots, in one day.

NEW BLOOD/ E2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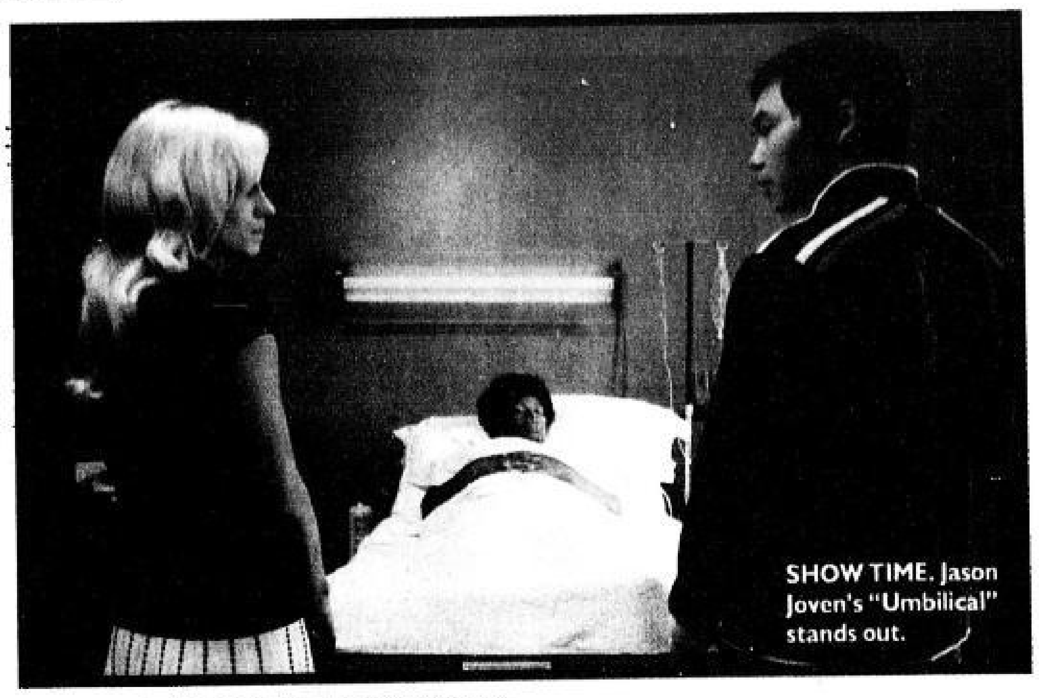
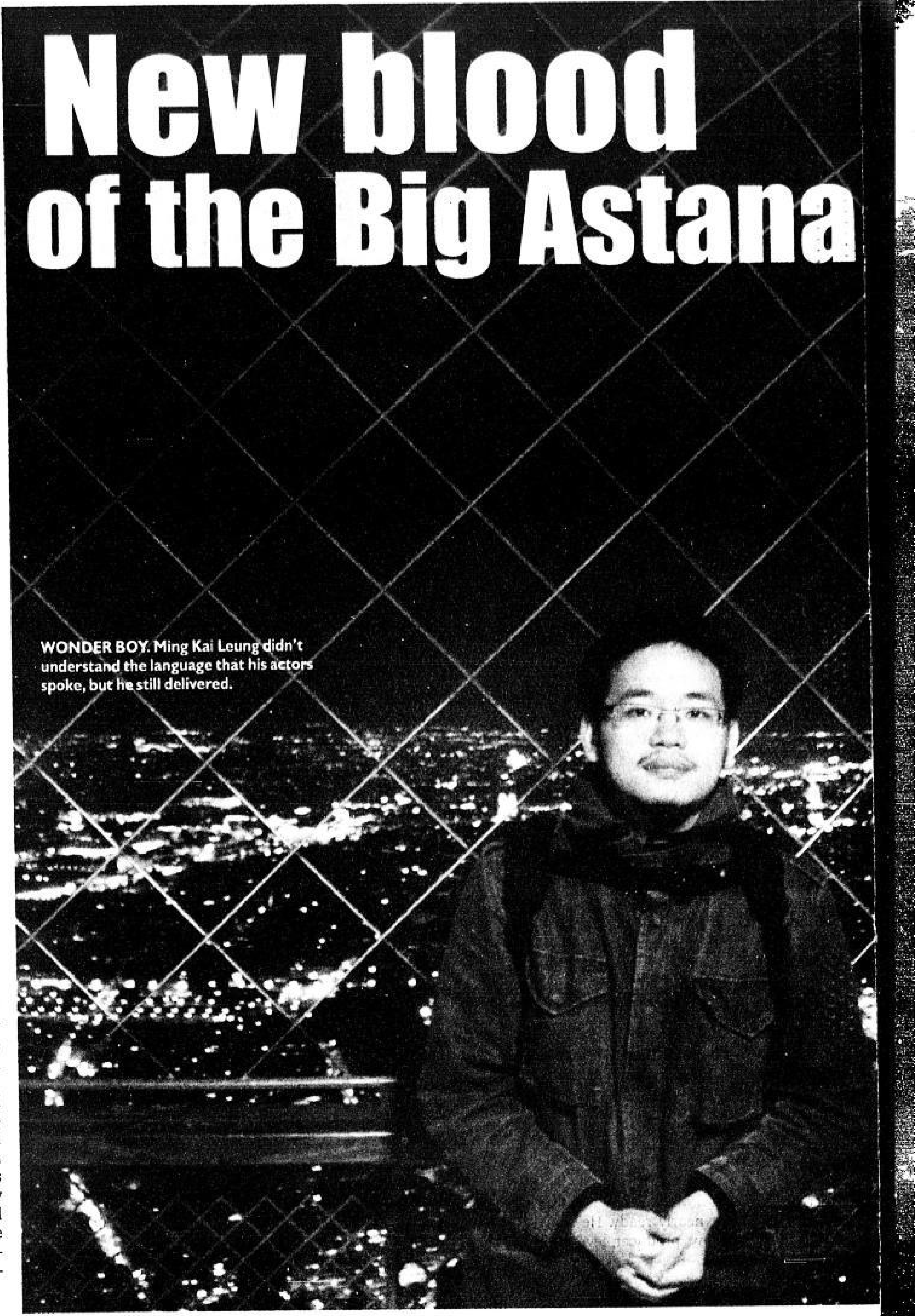
New blood of the Big Astana



SHOW TIME. Jason Joven's "Umbilical" stands out.



WONDER BOY. Ming Kai Leung didn't understand the language that his actors spoke, but he still delivered.

From page E1

It was a lovely experience."

On his film premiering right at his homeland, Jason says that he was a bit embarrassed. "I'm totally proud of 'Umbilical,' of course, but when you sit there, showing a film that you wrote in your boxers to the general public, the experience just hits you in the head."

The young filmmaker, whose biggest creative influences include Sofia Coppola, Hayao Miyazaki, Spike Lee, Gnarls Barkley, Howard Zinn, Justin Bua and James Nachtwey, feels encouraged to see people create from their hearts, believing that any artistic creation is a sharing of feelings, thoughts, humanity.

"It makes me feel part of this secret brotherhood that keeps the world awake, alive, and living."

The little big things

While finishing his law degree at the University of Hong Kong, Ming Kai Leung started using a consumer camera borrowed from his aunt to make home videos. He got pretty hooked. (He says, however, that those works are well hidden on the corners of his hard drives.)

Right after graduation, he went to Columbia University in New York to study in their MFA film program. That time, he wasn't that versed on what directing a movie meant.

For some funny reason, Ming thought all along that he would end up not as a filmmaker, but as a screenwriter. But he soon learned that fate had other things planned for him. In Columbia, he met a lot of fellow film students whom he worked with on projects. They would criticize each other's works and would whine about current movies. Through the numerous chances to work on the cinematography of his friends' pieces, Ming developed his visual vocabulary.

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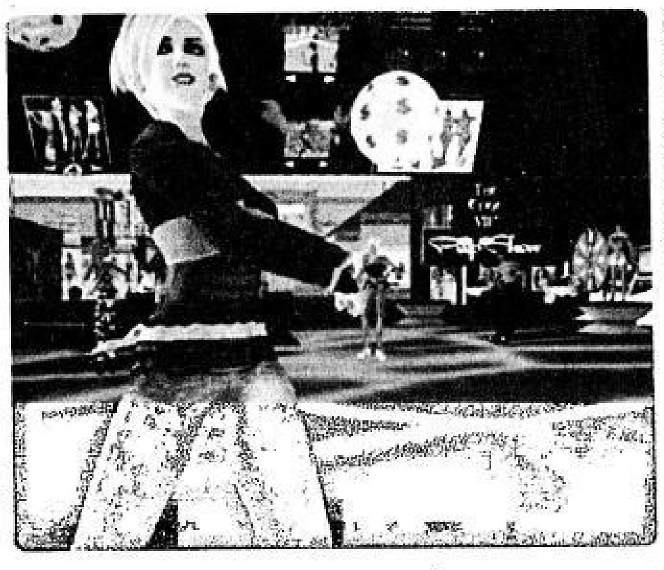

MY VIRTUAL place or yours? The scene in the "In-World."

From pag

Virtua

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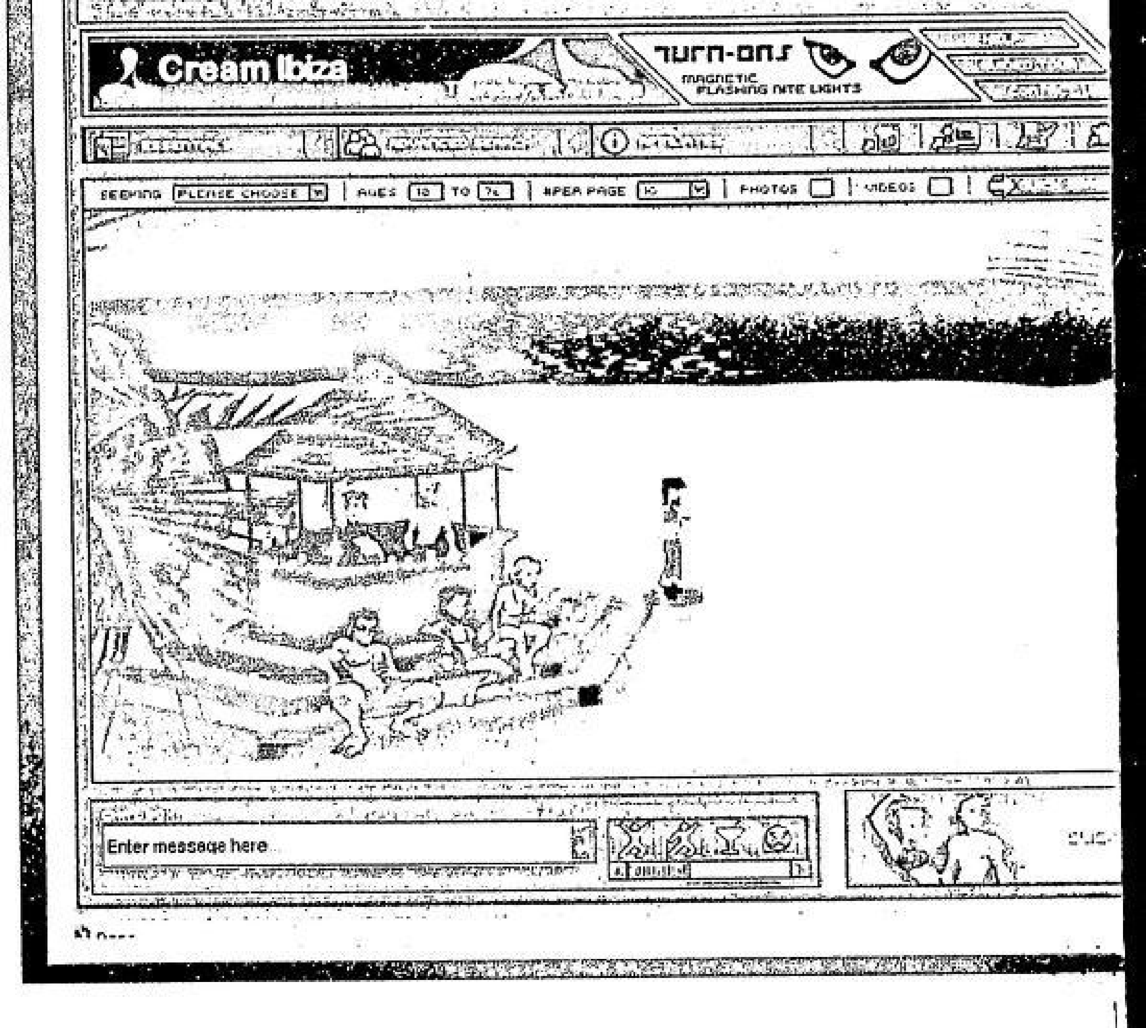
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ROCK STARS IN EXCESS. Three boys, a band, and a great story

About a voice

His thesis for his MFA, the film "Three Boys," was one of the shorts that competed in Cinemanila. It was Ming's first time directing something on film, and working with actors who spoke a language (Tagalog) that he didn't understand.

Loss of opportunity, nostalgia of youth and powerlessness have always been the recurring themes of his works. But he recalls that he was not happy with the early drafts of the script. He was dealing with such a sad subject with a sad tone that didn't interest him at all.

"I was about to drop the whole idea and start all over again. But then I talked to a good friend of mine who I met back in college who told me that what I needed was humor, which was like a "ding" in my head. I found my tone," Ming says.

He was about to shoot the film in Hong Kong, but he found his country's music scene boring. He also didn't know who would produce his film. So he got help from his friend Maria Jamora, who went to Columbia with him. She agreed to produce it immediately, and shared to Ming that when Filipinos are sad, they start telling jokes to dilute the emotion. That was exactly what Ming was heading for, so he flew to Manila.

Rock stars can act

It was Ming's first time to come to Manila. Within a month, he had to struggle to direct his $15,000-dollar budget film here, with a script not nearly ready. He shares, "But thanks to my producer, everything pulled off. The locations are amazing and my producer had ideas of people I should cast. Her choices proved to be right."

In the middle of casting the role of the vocalist of the three-man band, he found himself flipping through Marie's photo albums and pointed to her people that he thought would be perfect for the character in his mind. He gave her two pictures, and they both turned out to be actual pictures of real-life music man Marc Abaya.

Abaya shared the screen with Ping Medina and another famous band star, Yan Yuzon, Ming had nothing but good things to say about the three boys: "My actors gave great inputs. It was not my style to do intense rehearsals with my actors. I preferred to let them bring in their own character and this took the script to a higher level."

Since the shoot, Ming has kind of considered Manila as one of his hometowns. He felt pretty excited when he met Filipino filmmakers when he was at the talent campus in Berlin. Pedicab is also one of his all-time favorite bands.

Personally, I think that it is not Ming's own cinematic style that moved me, but his insights on human emotion. "Three Boys" was original and insightful—it focused on the simplest human actions, yet it affected the audience in a uniquely complex way.

---

life!

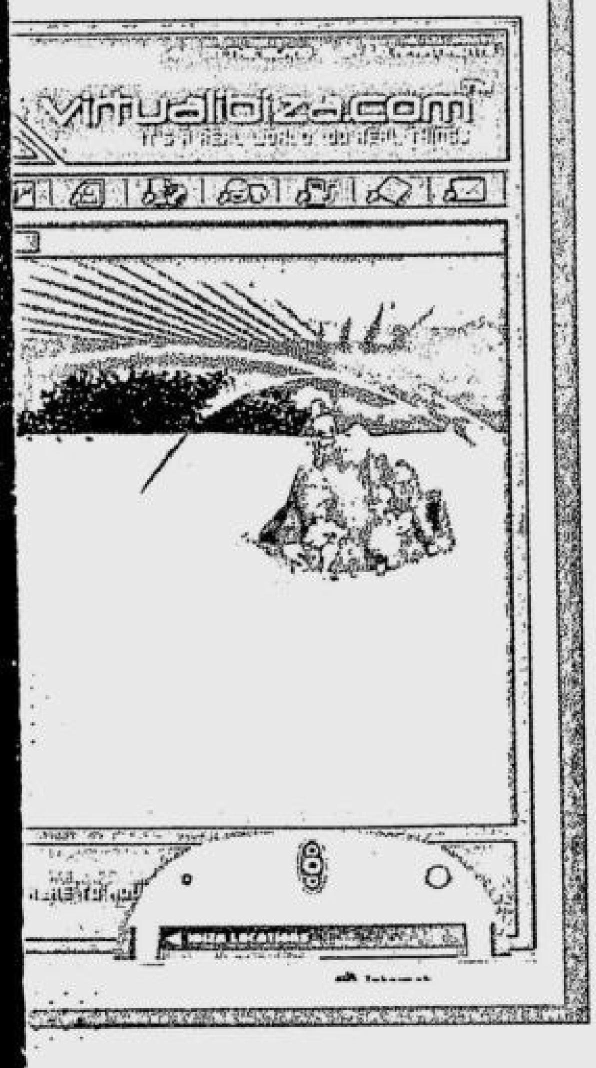
e E4

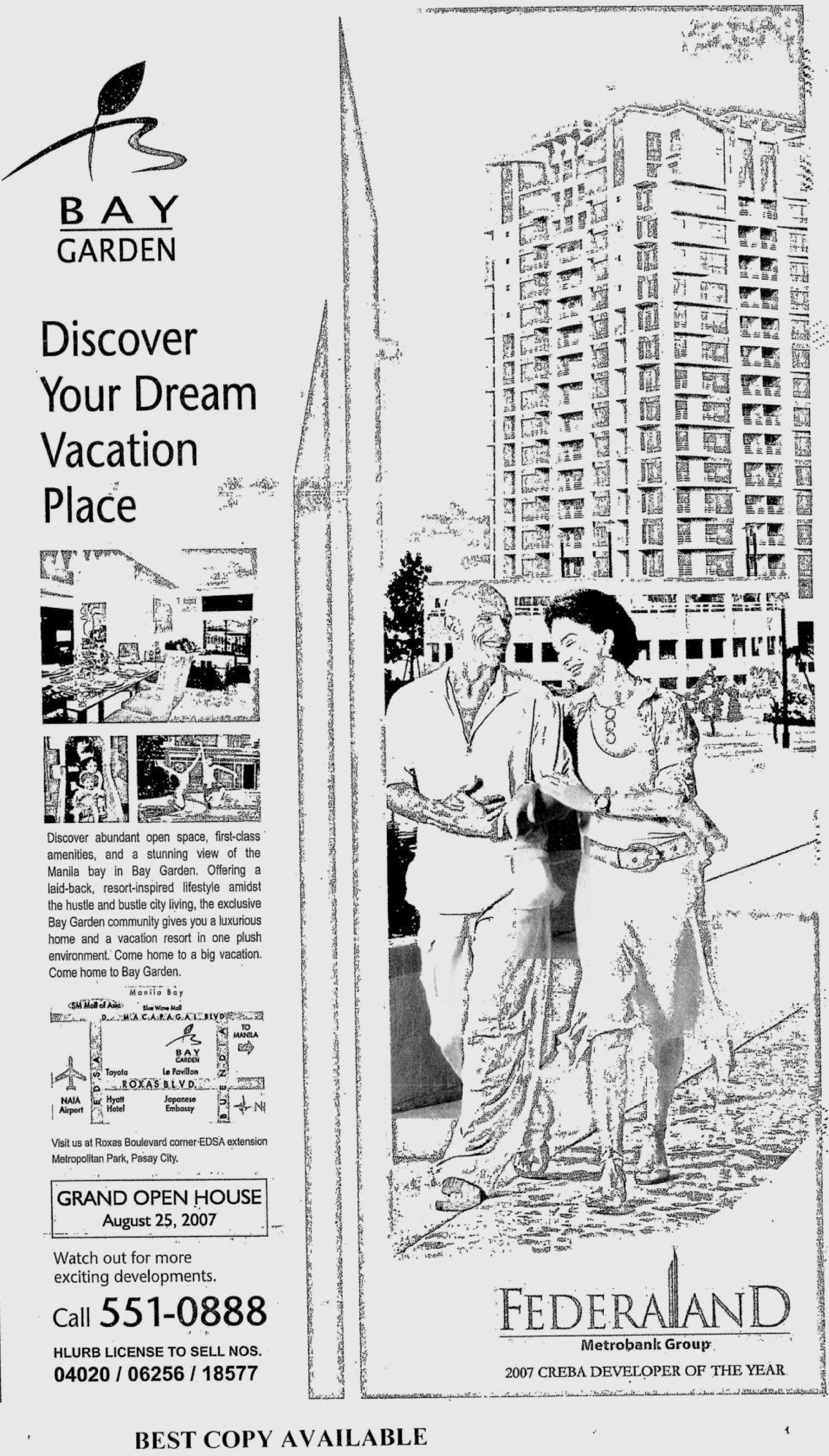
reality bites

at's the attraction Perhaps it is the to be able to enunlimited by the its of the real x= looks, y= z= passport). researchers are ploring whether true identities acome out when comforted by the ty of an avatar. comfortable fantasy than a harsh reality, right? Then again, what really is real? There is no freaking spoon!!!

Shiver again The ethical and philosophical implications from that old "Ghost in the Shell" are giving me a headache.

The universe is a-knockin' and it's asking me to choose between the blue pill and the red pill. For now, I'm choosing the one that'll take me to Ibiza.

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Get a (second) life!

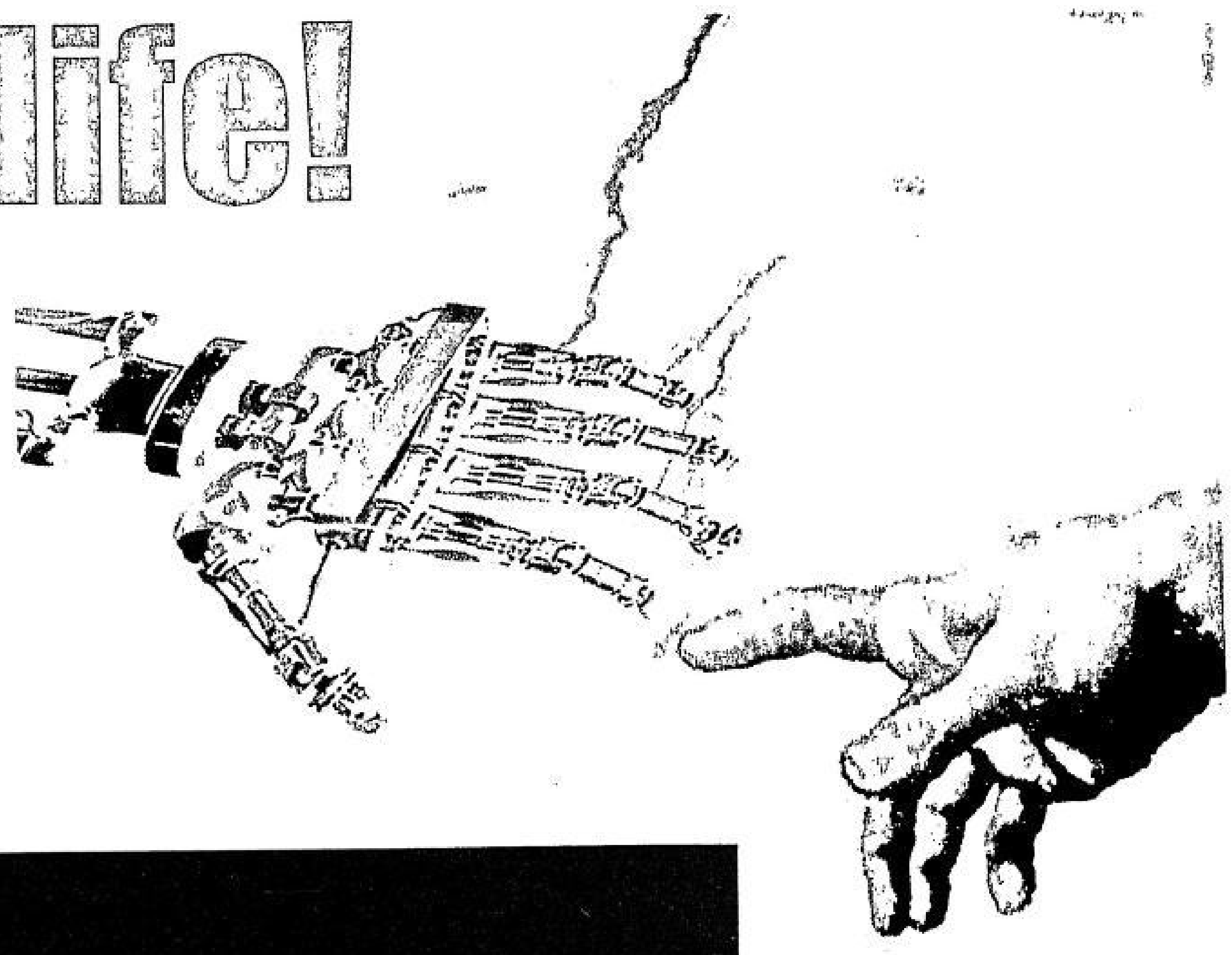
OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

(Or the day your avatar becomes cooler than you)

THE UNIVERSE HAD COME a-knockin'. Somebody had just been demoted from social butterfly to social larvae.

It happened recently, on a gorgeous night that had finally come to fruition after months of planning: an out-of-town despedida for a good friend celebrated with the usual suspects. It was close to perfect as far as tropical getaway parties go: accentuated by candy-pop colored drinks with fruit slices hugging glass rims,,served by waiters with exotic accents. After the customary toast to good friends, better futures and the best of times, one friend had exclaimed, "God I'm having so much fun I can't wait to go home and Multiply!" Thus sorta dulling the moment that was already gleaming to shiny-happy-people perfection.



LET there be virtual life.

For the non tech-savvy, my friend didn't mean that he wanted to do his part in perpetuating the species; he meant that he couldn't wait to get home, sit in front of the computer, post that night's photos with accompanying hipper-than-thou captions, and blog about it. Acceptable on any other circumstance, except home was thousands of miles away, and the nearest computer at that post-midnight hour was a run down Internet station, and... well, we were kinda in the middle of having a life here!

Truly, something's out of kilter if you're more concerned about your social life in cyberspace than the one you have in the real world.

Then again, perhaps avatars just have more fun.

Facebook of the future

If the popularity of social networking sites such as Multiply, MySpace, and the Internet's website du jour, Facebook, offer any clues to what the future holds, then we are only beginning to explore the possibilities of socializing in alternate realities.

The Internet's boom in the past decade has created a better closed-door lifestyle that's not just for introverted geeks or techies anymore, especially with its ability to connect people all over the globe in extremely creative ways beyond e-mail and chat. (Virtual beer keg anyone?) CNN reports that Facebook now has over 30 million users all over the world, with 8.5 million photos uploaded each day and 15 billion page views a month. Experts believe we are living in a flashpoint, predicting that by the year 2020, something much bigger will take the place of these addictive social networking sites, called social Virtual Worlds.

In a social virtual world, users inhabit and interact with each other in a 3D-generated and simulated environment, through their avatars, or graphical representations. An example of this virtual world is Second Life, which already has 8.9 million "residents" in its paraverse. They invite users into what they call the "In-World," with really creepy lines like, "from the moment you enter The World you'll discover a vast digital continent teeming with people, entertainment, experiences and opportunities..." How very "Vanilla Sky." *shiver*

The lines that ring the loudest alarm bells in my head read, "within your first hour, you'll notice that several residents approach you and introduce themselves. Second Lifers are eager to welcome you and show you around."

Thus, as an In-World resident, you can party at nightclubs, attend fashion shows and grace art exhibits, and bring friends back to your luxurious beachside pad. The possibilities are limitless in this alternate reality—your avatar can meet up your friends' avatars in Virtual Ibiza (which already exists by the way), then hook up with other bikini-clad avatars over cocktails at sunset, before hitting the clubs for a hedonistic night out 'til way past sunrise. In other words, you can have a social life that trumps Paris Hilton's! Even if you're really staring at a computer screen on a Saturday night.

If the thought seems too cyberpunk'd out to chew on, think of all those Facebook-ing and Multiply-ing people every night around the globe, happily sending their contacts a virtual round of tequila. Or wrap your head around the fact that of the 9 million Second Lifers, there are users who are actively investing in tracts of land in the In-World, because it is believed to be valuable real estate in the future. (One such virtual baron is Second Life millionaire Anshe Chung, who quite possibly dreams of electric sheep.) There's already talk about the boom of avatar fashion, virtual interior designers, landscapers and builders.

Hmm. Jamiroquai really *was* a modern prophet—the future *is* made of virtual insanity!

GET/E2

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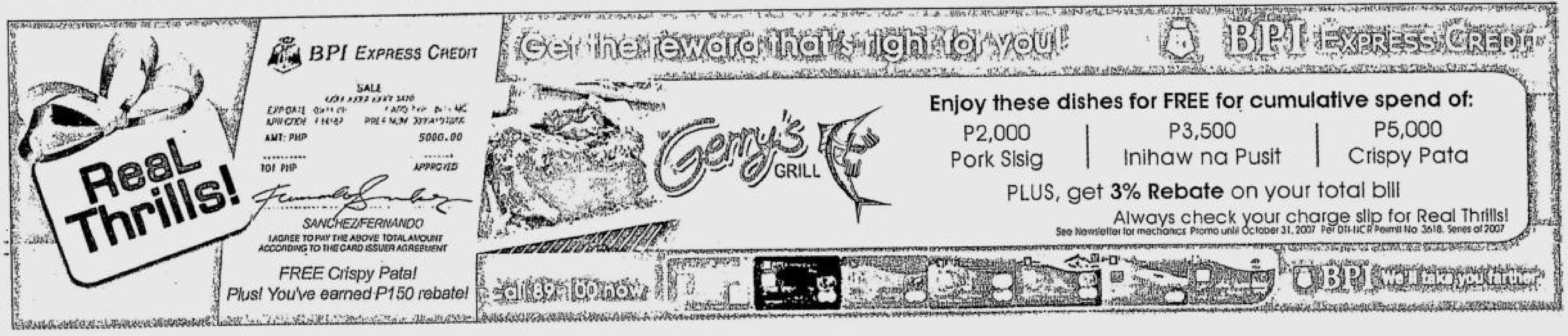
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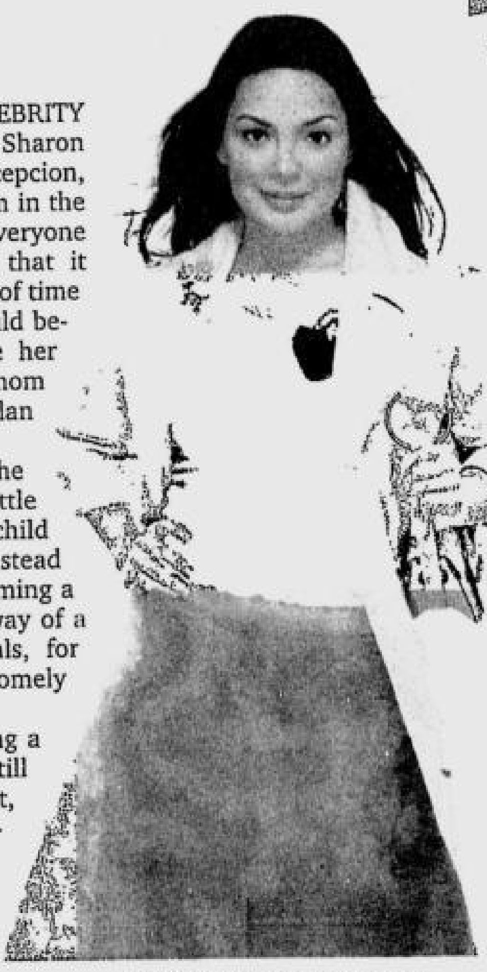
KC Concepcion —from endorser to performer

By Nestor U. Torre


CONCEPCION. May have to deal with a possible limitation resulting from her "sheltered" lifestyle.

DUE TO THE CELEBRITY status of her parents, Sharon Cuneta and Gabby Concepcion, KC Concepcion has been in the public eye since birth. Everyone in show biz expected that it would only be a matter of time before the cute kid would become a performer like her mom and dad—but mom Sharon had another plan for her daughter.

Probably because she didn't want to expose little KC to the pressures of child stardom, she was instead made to focus on becoming a product endorser, by way of a number of commercials, for which she was handsomely paid.

So, without becoming a performer, KC was still able to feather her nest, and remain in the public eye from childhood to her teenage years.

Once in a rare while, she was able to perform in stage musicals, but endorsements still figured most strongly in her life.

Decision

Then came her decision to study in Paris, and some people thought that move was just a prelude to KC to end up living and working abroad.

Recently, however, after finishing her course in Paris, KC came home to promote her forthcoming TV special on ABS-CBN. It was also intimated that the now grown-up Ms Concepcion might finally decide to become a performer after all—with some movies possibly lined up for her to star in.

If those plans do pan out, KC's fans will finally be able to see the young-adult star essaying what her mother does best—act and sing. They had wanted KC to do this years ago, when she became a teenager, because that was when her mom, Sharon, also became a movie star.

But, it was not to be, possibly because Sharon thought KC was still too young to deal with the darker side of stardom. She herself had to cope with those pressures, and they sometimes got the better of her, culminating in her becoming a wife and mother before she had turned 20.

Debut

Naturally, she didn't want her daughter to go through all of that, so her movie debut was indefinitely postponed. Now that KC is a young woman, however, she can more maturely cope with the dangers and "temptations" of stardom, hence her impending "graduation" from endorser to performer.

How well will she do in her new career thrust? Having minored in theater arts in college, she can be expected to have learned the ropes of acting. In terms of singing, her voice is quite tuneful, if still lacking in power. So, she should do quite well as a performer.

To do even better than that, however, KC may have to deal with a possible limitation resulting from her "sheltered" lifestyle. Excellent thespians rarely come from such a protected and sanitized background, because exceptional performances are generally based on realistic problems and conflicts.

Aspects of life

In other words, to become a better performer, KC may have to expose herself to the rougher and more real aspects of life, so she can portray characters different from herself.

Since most young women are not to the manor born, KC really has to make up for this slack, so that she can believably portray "ordinary" characters.

How can she pull this off? Her similarly well-born mother, Sharon, who's acquired the common touch, can point her in the right direction!

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NOW SHOWING

Cautionary moral drives 'Hairspray's' music and magic

By Rito P. Asilo

"Hairspray"
D: Adam Shankman
S: Nikki Blonsky, John Travolta, Michelle Pfeiffer, James Marsden

PFEIFFER. Deliciously wicked.

ROUSING DANCE NUMBERS, loud music, big hair and bigger dreams—not to mention John Travolta in drag! —Just how campy can you get? Surprisingly, the big-screen adaptation of Marc Shaiman and Scott Whitman's Tony-winning 2002 Broadway musical (which was, in turn, based on John Water's 1988 campy cinematic classic) displays a substantial thematic punch beyond its goofy, glossy look and deceptively light tone.

Yes, there's also food for the soul in this charming albeit cautionary musical confection. Behind its characters' huge hairdos, picture-perfect smiles and catchy energy is a chaotic world in dire need of a reality check.

Set in color-conscious Baltimore in 1962, the film follows the glorious adventures of pleasantly plump teenager, Tracy Turnblad (the magnificent

CAUTIONARY/ F2

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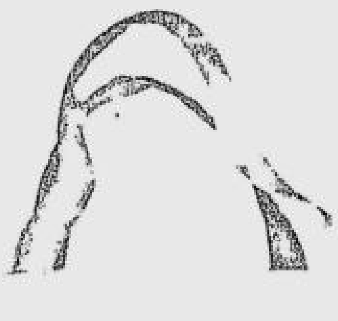
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They didn't believe us

By Nestor U. Torre

FROM TIME TO TIME, WE mull over the entertainment scene and come up with analyses intended to help obviate some negative consequences for show biz in general or individual projects in particular. More often than not, however, the telltale signs are ignored, and the dreaded minus points are chalked up.

An example of this is the local TV industry's use of big movie stars to generate maximum viewership for its shows. We warned the leaders of the movie industry to dissuade its stars from "going TV," because this could lead to the local viewing public's diminished patronage of Filipino films.

Worst fears

Alas, our worst fears have been confirmed: The local movie industry is now in dire straits, while television has become the most prosperous and influential medium in the country—"thanks," in part, to the drawing power of the movie stars who topbill its many shows.

Another debacle that entertainment industry leaders failed to avert was the unprofessional conduct of our spoiled action stars, who used to reign supreme at the box office.

Their action starrers made big money, so they got an inflated notion of their actual worth. They jacked up their talent fees, demanded a bigger say on the production people who worked with them, and line-produced their own movies—for added millions.

Well, their movies started flopping left and right, and the "impossible" has happened: The once invincible action movies are seldom produced these days, and most action superstars .have been put out to pasture, or forced to make-do with roles on TV sitcoms, where they've turned heavy-handed ribticklers.

Big deal

From time to time, some local show biz stars make a big deal out of their "invasion" of Hollywood to become "international" stars.

We caution them to firm up their job offers first, but they think their great looks and talent are enough for them to get what they want.

Months or years later, however, they finally admit failure and come back to reenergize their local careers. All too often, however, it's too late, since the fans they had "abandoned" have opted to support younger stars, instead.

This is also true when it comes to filmmakers. Some people who profess to be well-connected in Hollywood offer to help new directors find work in the world's film capital, and many hopefuls compete for that big break.

Alas, many "winners" eventually come home with little to show for their vaunted cinematic sojourn. When will they ever learn?.

We've also been warning our artists that our "deathless" colonial mentality had to be faced and dealt with *first*, before Filipino performing arts and media can truly flower.

Subservience

Unfortunately, our subservience to foreign and alien standards and production models continues to fester, so we've yet to come into our own as unique artists.

Worse, English-language and "foreign-clone" projects provide unfair competition for truly Filipino productions.

Taking a more specific tack, we cautioned against casting Regine Velasquez and Piolo Pascual as sweethearts in a movie together, because their obvious age difference could run counter to the visual harmony inherent to successful romantic-comedy-dramas.

Age problem

Well, their film ended up not doing as well as expected, and some industry observers now agree that the age problem had something to do with that outcome.

These days, we detect the same problem affecting "A Love Story," the new movie starring Aga Muhlach, Maricel Soriano and Angelica Panganiban.

The Aga-Angelica "May-October" pairing is no problem, but the Aga-Maricel tandem is. This is due to the fact that Aga's recent makeover has made him look younger than his actual age, while Maricel looks more mature.

Cautionary moral drives 'Hairspray's' music and magic

From page F1

Nikki Blonsky, fitting perfectly into the role originated by Ricki Lake), who turns her dream into reality when she unexpectedly becomes a regular on the local dance TV show hosted by Corny Collins (the dashing James Marsden).

When she starts using her unlikely popularity to speak out for her "integration, not segregation" advocacy, she earns the ire of station manager Velma Von Tussle (the deliciously wicked Michelle Pfeiffer), who strictly enforces the network's all-white policy. If she had her way, Velma would gladly cancel even the monthly Negro Day show hosted by Motormouth Maybelle (Queen Latifah)!

Tracy's progressive ideas and rabble-rousing ways soon endanger her spot on the show but, with her parents—Wilbur and Edna (Christopher Walken and John Travolta, respectively)—behind her, she stubbornly stands up for what she believes is right! She reasons, "I just want tomorrow to be better!" Indeed, the film's hefty teenage heroine insists that "it's not about breaking the rules, but changing them"—for a better world!

After the egregiously irreverent Divine and Harvey Fierstein played the role of Tracy's loving laundress mom, Edna Turnblad, Travolta looks rigidly enormous in his size 60 fat suit, but you can't fault him for his heart and his never-fading terpsichorean flair—especially in his "You're Timeless to Me" number with the wacky Walken.

With Pfeiffer, Latifah, Walken, Travolta and the production's energetic young performers (Amanda Bynes, Zac Efron, Brittany Snow, Elijah Kelley), exciting newcomer Nikki Blonsky anchors Adam Shankman's rousingly triumphant film musical. Marsden is a joy to watch as the dapper TV host who proves he's no pushover beside Pfeiffer's catty, scene-chewing character. Cameo alert: Ricki Lake, Pia Zadora and John Waters—so don't blink!

TRAVOLTA AND LATIFAH. Integration, not segregation.

To movie producers who are partial to musicals, here's a thought: Why not put James Marsden and fellow "X-Men" alumnus, Hugh Jackman, in a "Tap Dogs"-like song-and-dance musical with theater heartthrob Adam Garcia and "Fantastic Four's" Chris Evans, who is himself a self-confessed tap dancer? Wouldn't that be something to look forward to?

"Surf's Up"

D: Ash Brannon, Chris Buck
S: Voices of Shia LaBeouf, Jeff Bridges

Directors Ash Brannon and Chris Buck's stylishly glossy "mockumentary" animated feature about those wingless birds on surf boards also dispenses an oft-repeated moral: Winning isn't everything—as long as you're comfortable with your own "wave":

Impressionable 17-year-old penguin, Cody Maverick (voiced by Hollywood's current "It" boy, Shia LaBeouf), takes his rare shot at greatness when he is whisked off from Shiverpool, Antarctica to Hawaii's Pen Gu island to participate in the 10th edition of the Big Z Memorial Surf-Off,which is mounted as a tribute to surfing icon, Zeke "Big Z" Topanga (Jeff Bridges).

About a decade ago, however, Big Z was presumed to have died and vanished off the face of the ocean after losing to current champ, nine-time titleholder Tank Evans (Diedrich Bader).

As cinematic fate would have it, the passionate but unpolished Cody runs into a life-changing denouement when he meets Pen Gu's attractive lifeguard, Lani Aliikai (Zooey Deschanel), and her eccentric uncle, Geek. He soon discovers that there's more to the seemingly unaffected hermit than his outlandish demeanor and tacky beachside garb!

Sony Pictures' visually sumptuous feature takes a laid-back approach to the usually energy-fueled animation genre. But, while the movie undoubtedly charms with its unique combination of irreverence and optimistic tone, it is dragged down by its initially engaging but occasionally off-putting documentary-style moments and mocking tone.

However, the performances of its voice actors make it a must-see: LaBeouf and Bridges' different but complementary approaches to their respective roles hold the film together—even when its lack of narrative energy almost grinds the movie to a halt. Unfortunately, good performances don't a great movie make!

MONTAGE

Stephen King chiller opens on Aug. 29

ADAPTED FROM A TERRIFYING STORY BY suspense master Stephen King, "1408" is a chiller about a hotel room from hell. John Cusack plays a horror novelist who believes only in what he can see with his own eyes.

But, when he checks into suite 1408 at the notorious Dolphin Hotel to research his latest book, "Ten Nights in Haunted Hotel Rooms," he is forced to believe in ghosts—because they hound and haunt him, night and day!

Like all Stephen King heroes, he goes from skeptic to true believer—and just barely survives the night! "1408" starts its Philippine run on Aug. 29.

Iya Villania for Sun Cellular

Iya Villania's latest Sun Cellular commercial delights her because it enables her to play a Lara Croft-like action character. She loved her character so much that she did all the stunts herself!

The TV commercial is for the newest one-day unlimited SMS service called Sun Text Unlimited (TV) P15, which offers nonstop Sun-to-Sun texting for 24 hours. Iya asserts that Sun's service is valuable to students like her, enabling them to share information about school assignments and projects. Sun TV 15 is available through Xpressload and at all Sun loading stations.

Penshoppe's Higher Learning campus tour

Penshoppe is currently holding its biggest concert tour, billed as "Higher Learning: The Bamboo Campus Tour." Not your ordinary performance series, it takes education to a higher and hipper level.

Its unique features include Learning Hubs, Penshoppe Style 101 with fashion insider Cherrie Pacheco-Uy, Makeup and Beauty with Michelle Lim, How to Mix and Spin with DJ Mike Cons, and a Runway Ramp Workshop with Matteo Guidicelli and Dawn Balagot.

To top it all, the Bamboo band gives a powerhouse performance. After Cebu, Davao and Baguio, the tour next rocks Manila on Sept. 25.

HARGITAY AND MELONI. Play police detectives in "Law and Order."

Hallmark goes dramatic

Next month, the Hallmark Channel highlights intensely dramatic productions that tell stirring tales of grief, abuse and solace. On Sept. 3 at 9 p.m., "Without a Trace's" two-part finale has the squad face a gripping dilemma when a member of the team is maimed in a hostage situation. Senior agent Jack Malone (Anthony LaPaglia) makes a bargain that puts him in peril.

Sept. 10 at 11 p.m., "Hidden Places" has its female protagonist grappling with the uncertainty of her family's future. Then, an intriguing drifter comes to take her out of her sleep—could he be the miracle she's been waiting for?

Sept. 18 at 11 p.m., "Love's Abiding Joy" chronicles a family's unyielding perseverance, and the tragedy that tests their abiding faith.

And on Sept. 20 at 9 p.m., the eighth season of the acclaimed series, "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," premieres on Hallmark. Don't miss it!

Book of photographs

Isa Lorenzo's photographs of 30 Filipina pioneers have been compiled into a book, which will be launched at 6 p.m. today at the Fully Booked flagship store. Call 816-0044.

Bukas Palad

Bukas Palad marks its 20th year with an album launch today at the Ateneo de Manila's Church of the Gesu. The new album, "Hindi Kita Malilimutan," is a double CD with 20 tracks.

'Planet Carnivore'

National Geographic Channel telecasts "Planet Carnivore," a series about fearsome hunters who chomp their way to the top of the food chain. On Aug. 30 at 9 p.m., the focus is on lions. On Aug. 31 at 9 p.m., it's on bears.

Casare Syjuco

At 8 p.m. today, Cesare Syjuco's latest exhibit of "literary hybrids," "No More Speeding Houses" opens with a live performance event at F+ART, K-D corner K-1 sts. Kamuning, QC.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 7:30 a.m., "Stand By Me." Tomorrow at 10:45 a.m., "Frankie and Johnny." Aug. 27 at 5 p.m., "Girl, Interrupted." Aug. 28 at 10:15 a.m., "Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang." Aug. 29 at 9 p.m., "Escape from Alcatraz." Aug. 30 at 5:30 p.m., "Lost in America." Aug. 31 at 4:15 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire."

CUSACK. Topbills "1408."

On Cinemax today at 9 p.m., "Memphis Belle." Tomorrow at 7 p.m., "In Good Company." Aug. 27 at 6:30 a.m., "Tabruk." Aug. 28 at noon, "Gladiator." Aug. 29 at 2 p.m., Alfie." Aug. 30 at 6 a.m., "Rebel Without A Cause." Aug. 31 at 4:45 p.m., "The Interpreter."

Mr. V at Alchemy

Alchemy (tel. no. 706-1305) features the powerhouse grooves of New York DJ Mr. V at midnight tonight.

'Repaso'

Ivi Avellana Cosio's latest exhibit, "Repaso (Artmaking 1967-2007)," runs until Sept. 8 at Avellana Gallery (833-8357).

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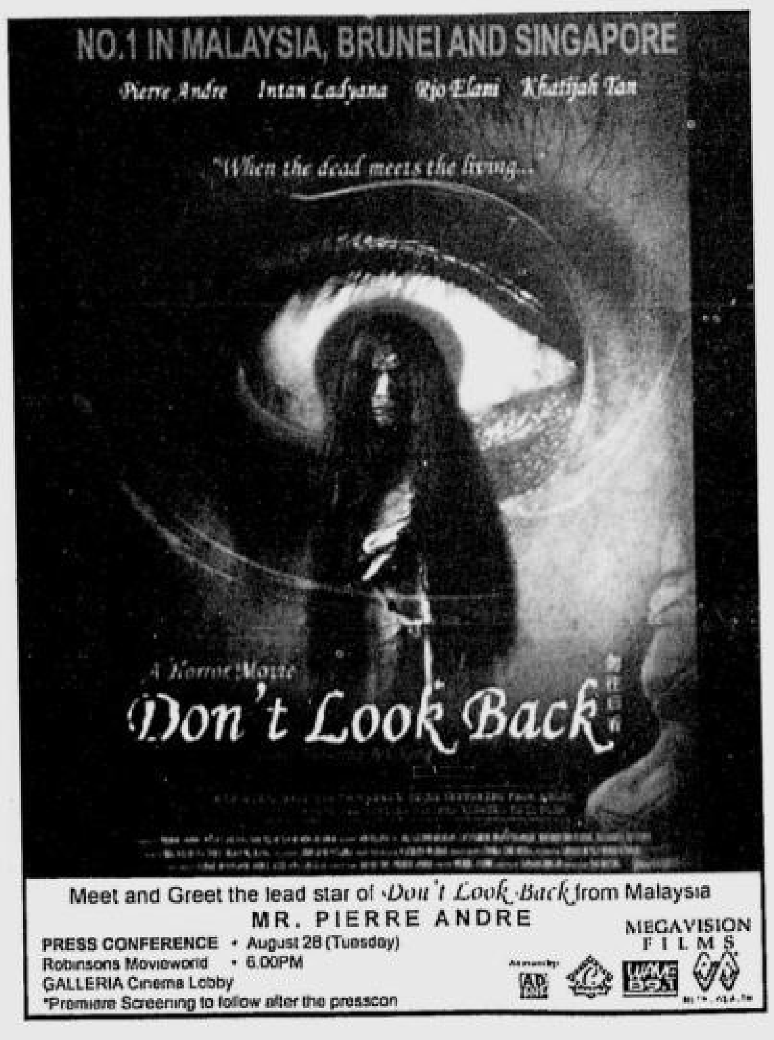
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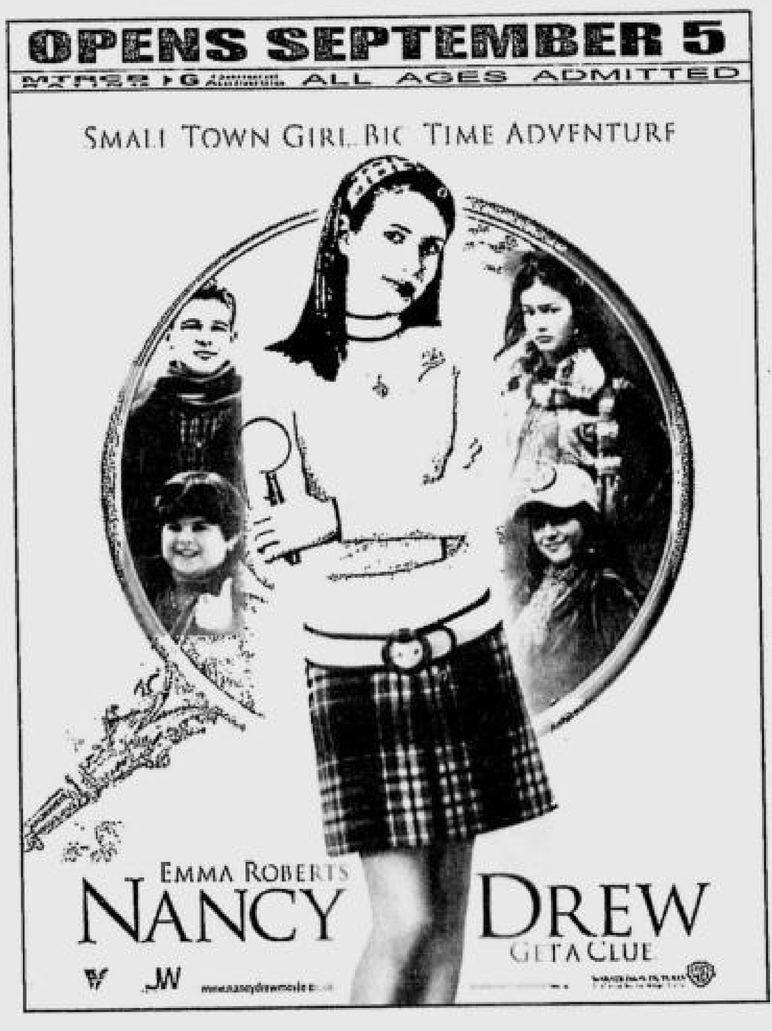
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Impromptu concert is Pete Roa's triumphant last hurrah

ROA. As per his instructions, his wake was a joyful celebration of song and friendship.

By Behn Cervantes

SOON AFTER PETE ROA MARRIED HIS TV co-host, Boots Anson, he became an ABS-CBN executive. Since he came from the performing arts, he took an interest in his fellow singers and dancers. After all, he was a lithe and graceful fellow who, as his brother Dado has affirmed, "was primarily a dancer."

As a television network executive, Pete encouraged the careers of the likes of Jose Mari Chan, Pinky de Leon and Marilen Martinez.

Pete loved to sing. Therefore, it was not unusual to find him in the midst of other "karaoke-addicted" ABM (*ayaw bumitaw sa* microphone) "majors." Even when he was already wheelchair-bound, he regularly visited Pilita Corrales' Greenhills restaurant to sing his favorite classics with Asia's Queen of Song, along with the Wing Duo's Angie and Nikki Ross. Boots, of course, was there beside him.

Dutiful wife

Upon his passing, Boots obediently followed Pete's instructions to make his wake a joyful celebration of song and friendship—he wanted everybody to have a good time! In the first days of the wake at the Arlington Funeral Homes, the dutiful wife informed friends that a "concert" was going to be held on Aug. 13, to honor her dear husband's wishes—and to celebrate a life well-lived!

Pete's friends lovingly congregated for the free concert. Owing to the expected large crowd, the Roa family moved Pete's remains to the funeral parlor's largest room. A separate room served as a Green Room for the "performers" assembled. The affair quickly turned into a party, where an indefatigable pianist played vintage music while friends and family made merry.

The Roa family installed a giant screen at the funeral parlor's garden area, where tents were set up for other guests. Naturally, bystanders were interested in the stars present for the impromptu musical event.

After all, the "concert" was going to be Manila's most star-studded musical concert of the season—and it was free, to boot. Indeed, Pete's graceful "exit" was a reminder that, once upon a time, there lived a loving husband, father and friend named Pete Roa.

The task of the "concert's" emcee, Gerald Sison, wasn't easy. To begin with, whom did you prioritize among those many talents? The previous nights, celebrities who exercised their vocal chords included Ariel Ureta, Rusty Salazar, Christopher de Leon and Cesar Montano.

In the crowded Green Room, Eddie Garcia said he was not going to sing. However, Isay Alvarez and Robert Seña agreed to render two songs. The lineup also included Ricky Davao, Jenine Desiderio, Richard Merk, his sister, Rachel Anne Wolfe, and their mother, the inimitable Annie Brazil.

Timeless ditties

Noel Trinidad, Leo Martinez, Willie Nepomuceno, Elizabeth Ramsey, Jose Mari Chan, Armida Siguion-Reyna and Marissa Sanchez rendered timeless ditties for the crowd.

If asked, Robert Arevalo, Amay Bisaya and Dado, might have contributed a song or two! After all, even Jinggoy Estrada sang, despite a public confession that he was not a balladeer in any way, shape or form.

The unconventional wake was a vivacious celebration of Pete Roa's exemplary and colorful life. Therefore, Senator Dick Gordon urged the assembly to embrace life positively and live by example—as did Pete!

It ended on an upbeat note when Boots thanked friends and family for making the "concert" the best production Pete has ever staged!

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A Horror Movie
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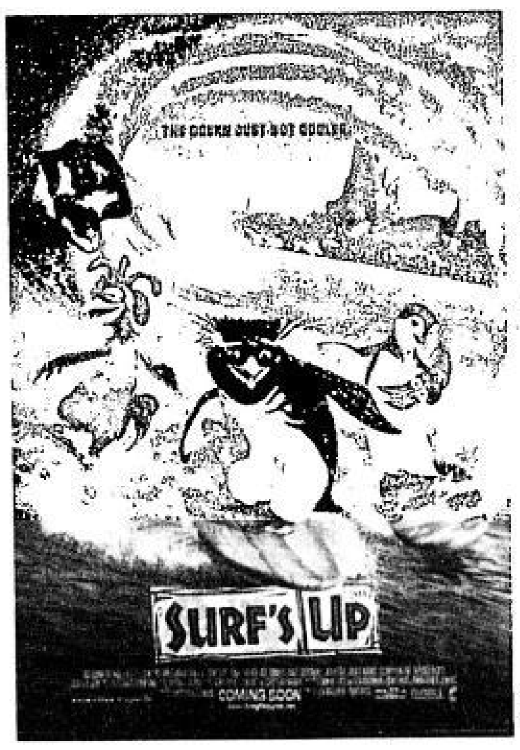

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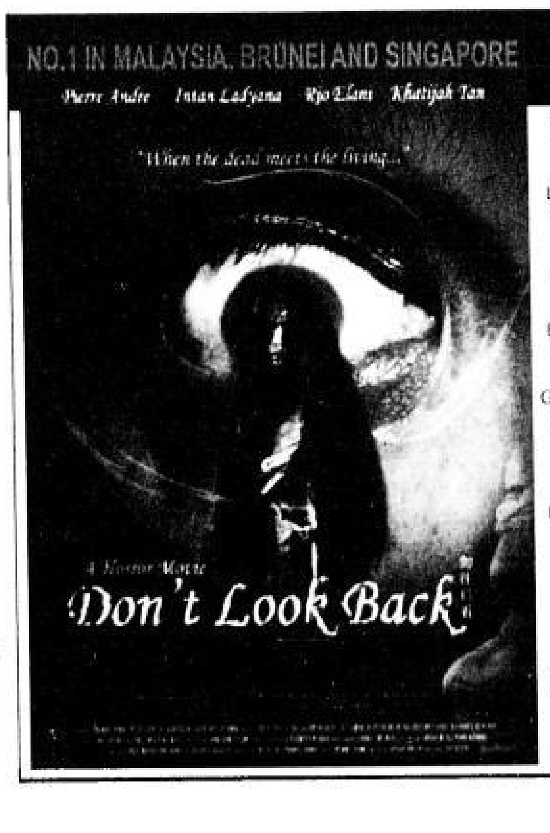

NO.1 IN MALAYSIA, BRUNEI AND SINGAPORE
Pierre Andre Intan Ladyana Rjo Elani Khatijah Tan
"When the dead meets the living..."
A Horror Movie
Don't Look Back

Don't Look Back
This horrifying and mysterious story is about a young man named Darma (Pierre Andre) who attempts to know the cause of death of Rose, his fiancee (Intan Ladyana), who was found dead in mysterious circumstances. Darma must now work with Rose's twin sister Seri to solve the mystery behind the death.
They begin their investigation with a visit to Rose's house, where Darma finds a bottle, and Rose's digital camera, which only deepens the mystery.
Bringing these unusual evidences home, Dharma finds himself facing horrifying events that flings his life into chaos.
Given a vacation by his boss (Jalaludin Hassan) at work Darma seeks the help of his aunt Mak Lang (Khatijah Tan), who lives with her daughter Lin (Rio Elani).
At Kampung, Darma and Seri discover the shocking truth that whatever happens, they should never dare LOOK BACK, because when life meets death, anything can happen!
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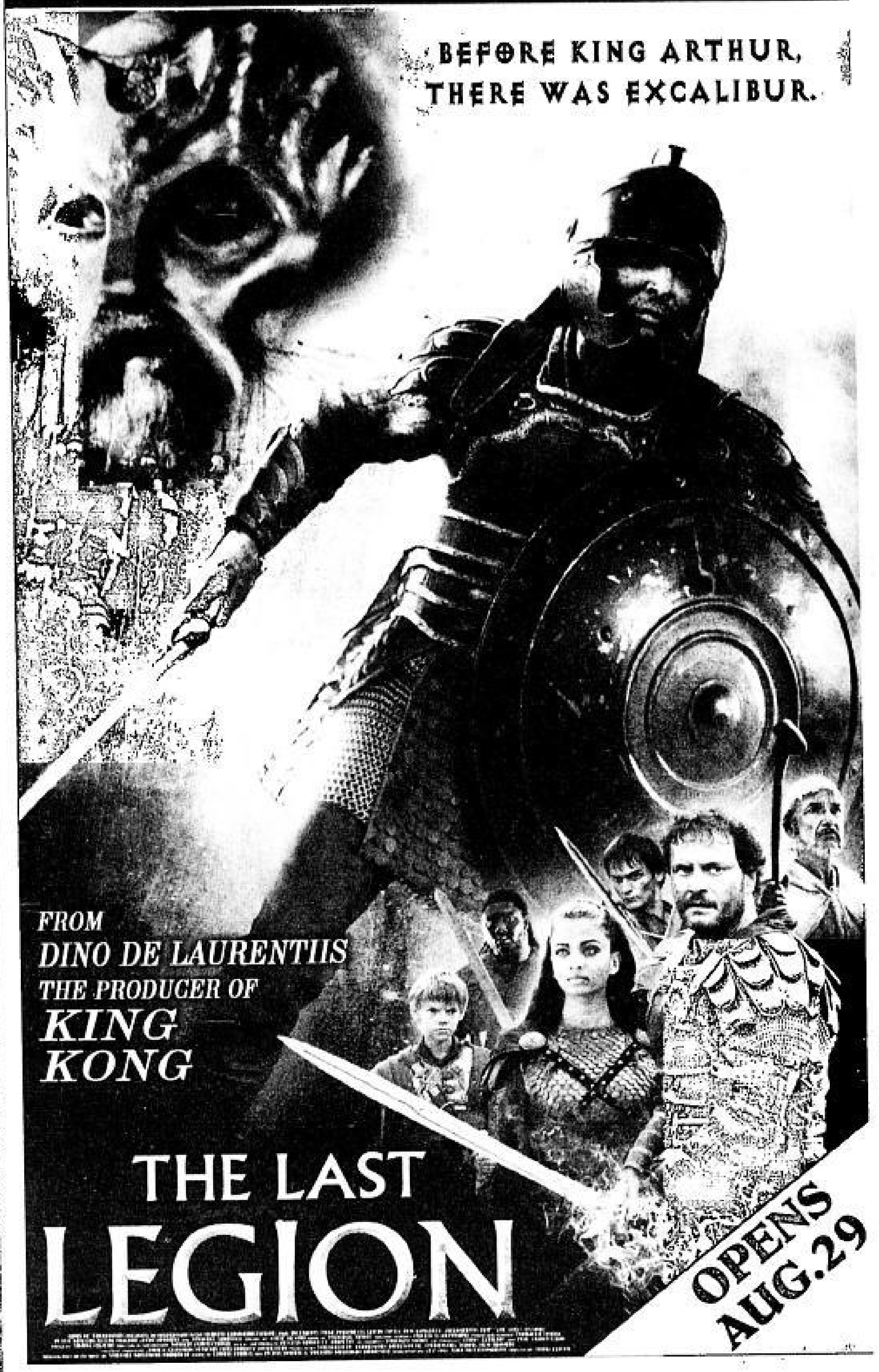

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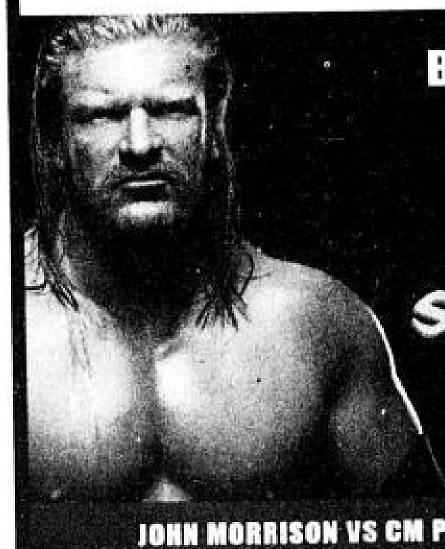

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SIGNOS 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	HAIRSPRAY 1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30	RUSH HOUR 3 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50	
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX	BOURNE ULTIMATUM 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50	A LOVE STORY 12:00 / 2:30 / 5:00 / 7:30 / 10:00	EVAN ALMIGHTY 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00

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12:00 The Girl Who Leapt Thru Time
2:00 Mukhsin
4:00 Persepolis
6:00 Rang De Basanti
9:00 Paris Je T'aime

Ali MALL 5

1	HAIRSPRAY 12:15 / 3:05 / 5:55 / 8:45	2	EVAN ALMIGHTY 11:45 / 2:00 / 4:15 / 6:30 / 8:40	3	BOURNE ULTIMATUM 1:20 / 3:45 / 6:10 / 8:35
4	SIGNOS 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	5	A LOVE STORY 1:00 / 3:30 / 6:00 / 8:30		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

Kaisa presents moving, kaleidoscopic view of Chinese-Filipino experience

CLASSIC "Pagoda" legend movingly comes to life in Kaisa's show, with Eva Marie Poon and Nelson Caruncho playing the central characters.

ON SEPT. 14 AND 15, THE Kaisa Para sa Kaunlaran Foundation presents "Tsinoy: Kaisa Ka!" a grand musical revue that takes a panoramic and kaleidoscopic view of the Chinese-Filipino experience, from Spanish times up to the present.

The entertaining, moving and insightful revue is written and directed by Nestor U. Torre, and boasts of an exciting cast of Chinese-Filipino talents, ably supported by some of the country's top musical theater performers.

Heritage

The show, which will be staged in Kaisa's own theater in its building in Intramuros (call 527-6083 or 482-0512) is about a young Chinese-Filipino, Bryan (Sherwin Sozon), who disdains his heritage and is bent on working in a big bank in New York.

Before he leaves, however, his grandfather takes him to Kaisa's famous museum on the Chinese in Philippine life through the years, and asks museum guide, Alita (Daphne Chiu), to knock some sense and love for his roots into his westernized grandson's head and heart.

Through a magical device instigated by some playful characters, Bryan is brought back into the past, where he experiences first-hand the sacrifice of inspiring Chinese-Filipinos like St. Lorenzo Ruiz, Hay Bing in Taal, Batangas, Gen. Ignacio Paua and Dr. Jose Rizal. In addition, he witnesses the massacre of many Chinese by the country's then Spanish overlords.

On the less tragic and more contemporary side, Bryan is introduced to the varied delights of Chinese cuisine, our champion *wu shu* performers, Jose Mari Chan optimistically singing about the future of our country's children, and Chinese-Filipinos talking and singing about the issues that have confronted them for years.

As the show peaks, it focuses on Chinese-Filipinos' spirit of volunteerism in many areas of the nation's life, which has made a deep impression on many people.

Focus

Specific focus: Kaisa's own Lawrence Ong, who devoted his young life to helping Aetas, refugees and rebel returnees deal with their many problems.

A particularly moving portion of the show retells the iconic legend of the Pagoda in China built as a tribute to the Chinese who migrated to the Philippines, and the relatives they left behind.

The Pagoda story reminds Bryan and other young Chinese-Filipinos of the sacrifice and suffering of their forebears, just so they could have a better life in their new country.

Capping the insightful and entertaining presentation is a focus on the Fil-Chinese Volunteer Fire Brigades, a number of whose heroic members risk their lives daily as they put out fires all over the country.

To make this portion even more significant, some volunteer firemen are participating in it, lending their expertise and equipment to the show so that it becomes truly believable and involving.

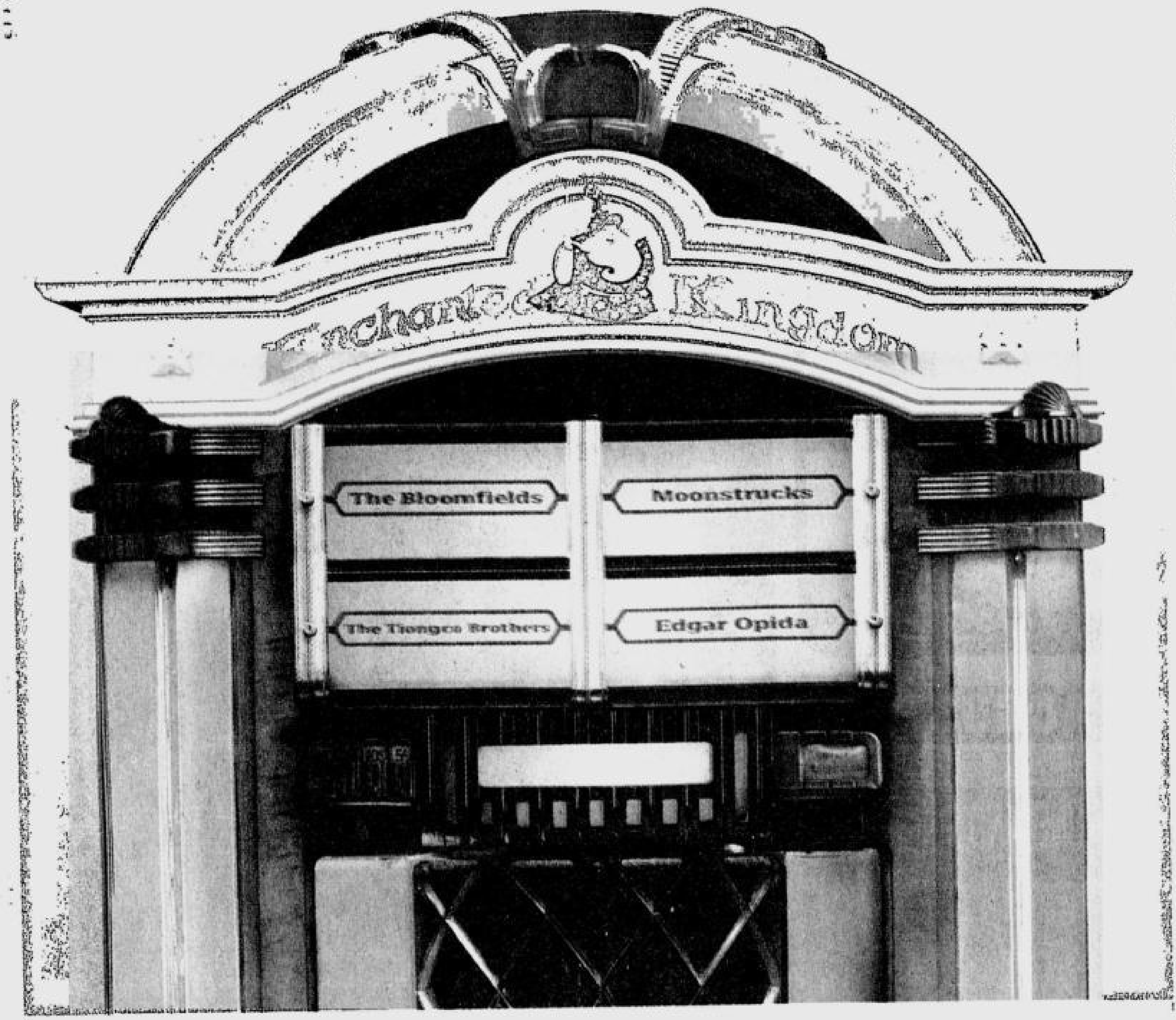
MASSACRE in the Chinese Parian is powerfully recalled in an operatic number.

Many beautiful songs have been written for the show by composer and musical arranger Jun Murillo, with lyrics by Torre, Rito Asilo and Noelani Torre. Gifted Chinese-Filipino talents in the presentation include Sozon, Chiu, Eva Marie Poon, Helen Lim Benoza, Paul Kelvin Ong, Lorraine Teng, Robbie Feliongco, Edwin Tan and Lizabeth Valerie Yap, and their musical-theater counterparts are Rito Asilo, Andy Bais, Nelson Caruncho, Estanislao Alinea, Jan Alexander, Russel Magno and Cecil, Roy, Roychelle and Mica Torre. Sets are by Leo Rialp and lights are by Martin Esteva.

Revue

The "Kaisa Ka" revue is being presented as a fundraiser for the foundation's many projects, the most significant of which are the continuing viability of the Bahay Tsinoy Museum and to support the staggering cost of maintaining the Kaisa Center.

It is hoped that, with its telling insights and fusion of talents, "Kaisa Ka" will vivify the foundation's avowed aim of drawing Chinese-Filipinos and Filipinos closer together, so they can transcend the differences and other problems that beset them in the past, and henceforth work together for the good of the country they both love—the Philippines.



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	Saturday & Sunday	10am to 10pm

The Bloomfields

*Fireworks at 9pm on weekends and holidays

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Come in a group of 5 or 6 and get as much as two (2) tickets absolutely FREE for your folks ages 50 and above! All they have to do is buy a Pepsi Cola product in any of the Pepsi booths at the EK Front Gate and present this along with a valid ID at the ticket counter to avail of the promo.

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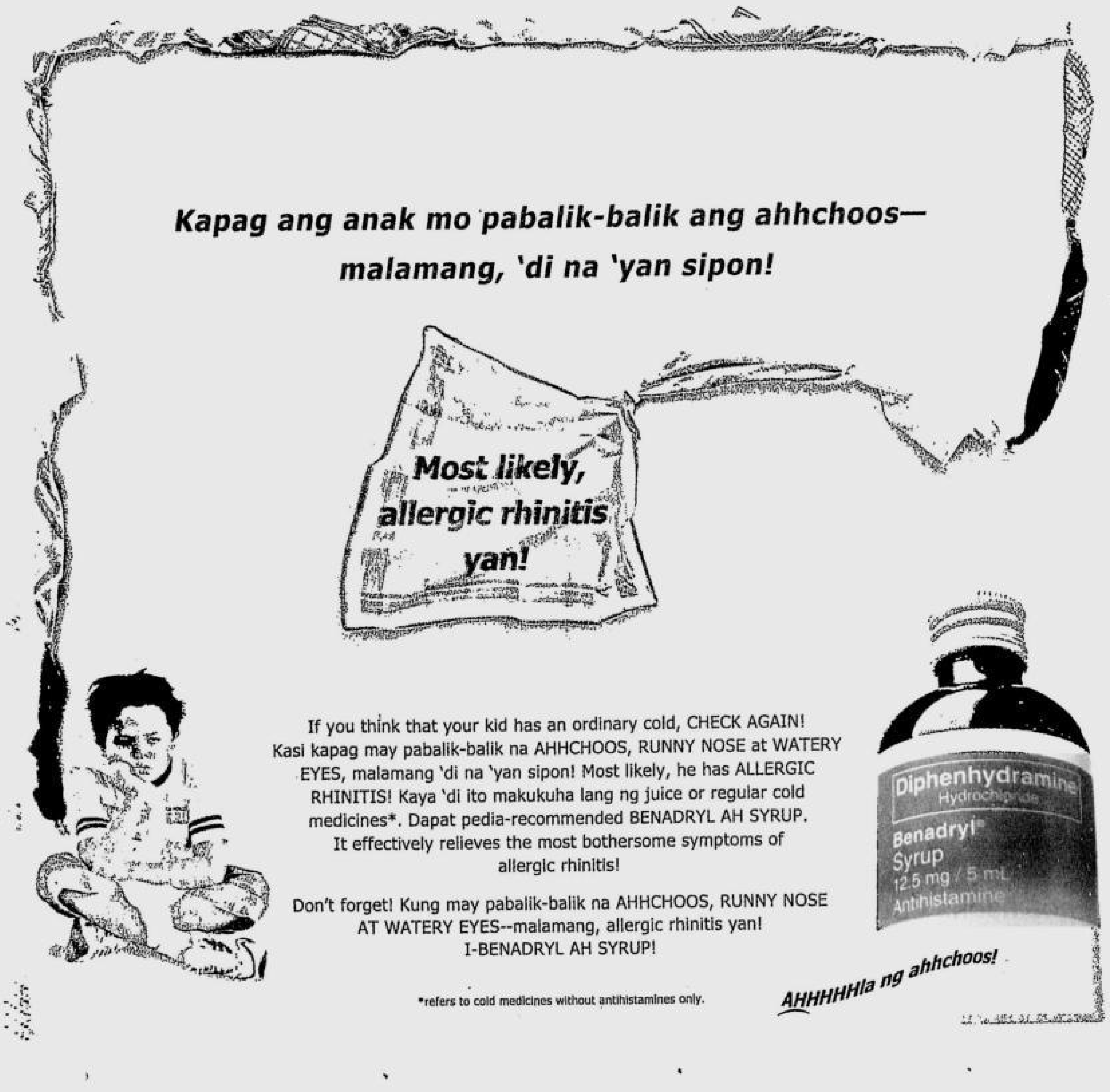
Per DTI Laguna Permit No. S-08-274, Series of 2007 See posters for details.


Most likely, allergic rhinitis yan!
Diphenhydramine Hydrochloride
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Syrup
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Kapag ang anak mo pabalik-balik ang ahhchoos—
malamang, 'di na 'yan sipon!

If you think that your kid has an ordinary cold, CHECK AGAIN! Kasi kapag may pabalik-balik na AHHCHOOS, RUNNY NOSE at WATERY EYES, malamang 'di na 'yan sipon! Most likely, he has ALLERGIC RHINITIS! Kaya 'di ito makukuha lang ng juice or regular cold medicines*. Dapat pedia-recommended BENADRYL AH SYRUP. It effectively relieves the most bothersome symptoms of allergic rhinitis!

Don't forget! Kung may pabalik-balik na AHHCHOOS, RUNNY NOSE AT WATERY EYES--malamang, allergic rhinitis yan! I-BENADRYL AH SYRUP!

*refers to cold medicines without antihistamines only.

AHHHHHla ng ahhchoos!

Ahhchoo!!! Ahhchoo!!! Ahhchoo!!!

Baka may allergic rhinitis ka na!

check out the difference between allergic rhinitis and common cold

SYMPTOMS	COMMON COLDS	ALLERGIC RHINITIS
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Stuffy Nose	✓	✓
Runny Nose	✓	✓
Itchy Eyes	X	✓
Fever	✓	X
Sore Throat	✓	X
Nasal Discharge	✓	✓ Usually clear
Body aches and pains	✓	X
Triggers/ Causes	Viruses	Allergens (pollen, house dust mites, molds)
Duration	Lasts about a week	Lasts as long as the allergens are present
What your doctor may advice	Rest, fluids, pain relievers, decongestants	BENADRYL AH

Remember! Basta allergic rhinitis, Benadryl AH!

AHHHHHla ng ahhchoos!

SATURDAY *Special*

Redd Ochoa is hopeful about RP's indie scene

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—"A NEWBORN arising is more like it," was how director Redd Ochoa described the Philippines' film industry, especially in the light of the great strides that the indie film sector is making.

New generation

Redd is attending the Montreal World Film Festival, where his movie, "Baliw," and two other Filipino films—Brillante Mendoza's "Foster Child" and Neil Tan's "Ataul (Casket for Rent)"—are featured in the festival's "Focus on World Cinema" section. Indeed, a new generation of filmmakers is revitalizing the presence of Filipino films in film festivals all over the world.

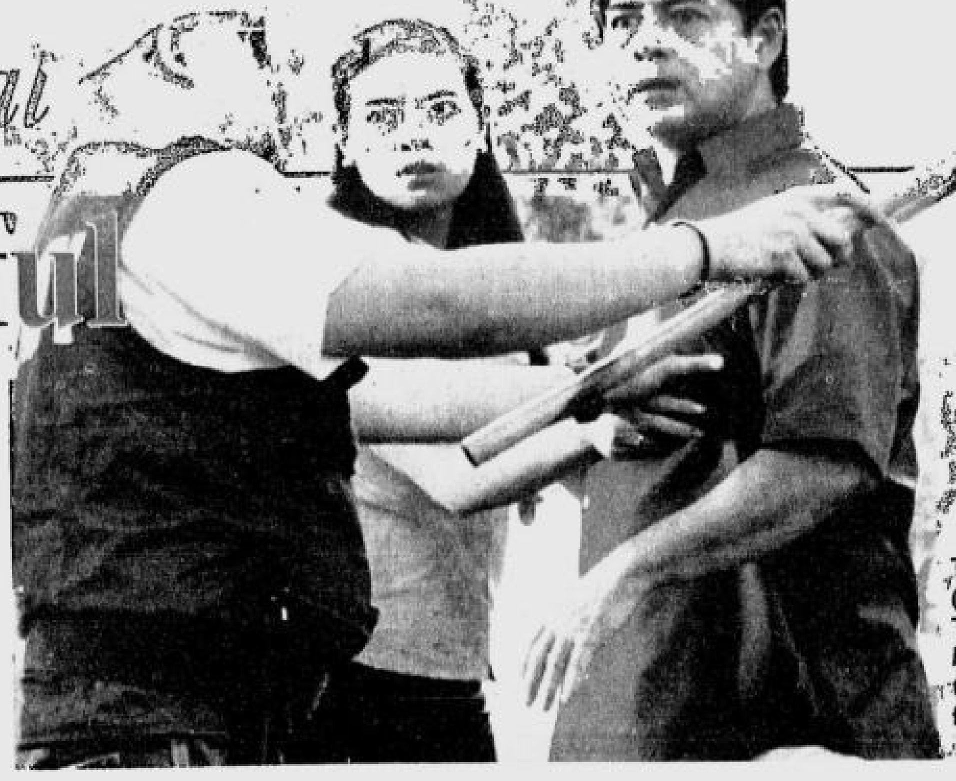
Via e-mail, Redd provided a brief plot outline of his entry, which stars Ryan Eigenmann, Joel Torre, Jaime Fabregas and Joshua Docareza: "'Baliw' is the story of a young man whose abusive childhood leads to his unstable mental state."

"Baliw" is Redd's first entry to MWFF. The Philippine-born filmmaker studied in Los Angeles and was based in New York until opportunities lured him back to Manila. Redd was an actor before he actively pursued his passion for directing. He studied film and television directing at New York University.

One of his first films, "Long Story Short," was screened at film festivals in North America—including the Los Angeles Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, and the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City.

"Baliw" is significant to Redd on several levels: The movie is not only his first indie feature in the Philippines, he also wrote, produced and directed it.

REDD/G2



TORRE (RIGHT). Topbills *Pinoy* entry to Montreal film fest.

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- For cartoon lovers — Mickey Mouse, Disney Cuties, Winnie the Pooh, Sesame Street, Looney Tunes, Snoopy, Garfield, Mr. Bean, Shrek, Spongebob Squarepants, Moose Gear

Calendar of Activities

ROBBY RABBIT
Meet & Greet
Aug. 25 SM Manila, Mall of Asia
Aug. 26 SM Dasmariñas, Bacoor

SCOOBY DOO
Coloring Activities
Aug. 25 SM Cubao
Aug. 26 SM Mall of Asia

SHREK 3
Meet & Greet
Aug. 25 SM Mall of Asia
Aug. 26 SM Cubao

Garfield
myscene
Justice League
Mr Bean
Hello Kitty
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Moose Gear
Barbie
Snoopy
Spider-Man 3
Cuties
©Disney
Shrek 3
Marvel Heroes
Sesame Street
Dora the Explorer
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SpongeBob SquarePants
Disney Fairies
Disney Princess
Finish
Start

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ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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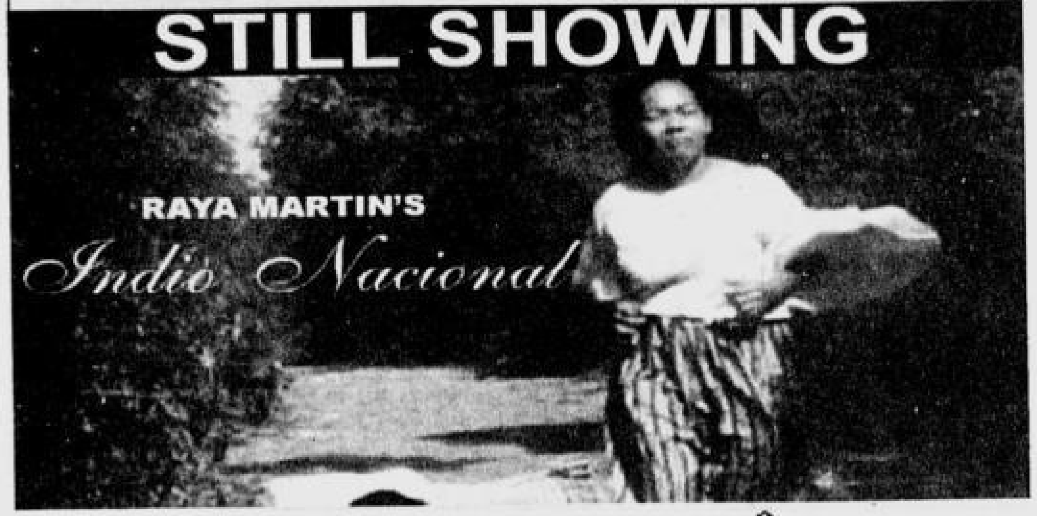
GALLERIA Ticket Price THX: P160 130 [illegible]

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY • THX 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
2 A LOVE STORY 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 RUSH HOUR 3 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
4 HAIRSPRAY 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
6 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
7 RISE 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
8 indieSine: INDIO NACIONAL 1:45 3:50 5:55 8:00
9 SURF'S UP 1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50
10 SIGNOS 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00



AUGUST 22 to 28
MTRCB Rating: PG13
indieSine

ONLY AT INDIESINE, Robinsons Galleria!

ERMITA Ticket Price: P110/P130 536-7811

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY 10:10 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
2 SURF'S UP 12:00 2:00 4:00
RISE 6:00 8:00 10:00
3 HAIRSPRAY 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 10:00
4 SIGNOS 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 10:00
5 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
6 A LOVE STORY 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
7 RUSH HOUR 3 10:15 12:15 2:15 4:15 6:15 8:15 10:00

METRO EAST Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 682-6199

1 HAIRSPRAY 1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00
2 A LOVE STORY 10:35 1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY 12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10
4 SURF'S UP 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10
5 RISE 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
6 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM 1:00 3:40 6:20 9.00
7 RUSH HOUR 3 11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10
8 SIGNOS 12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

NOVALICHES Ticket Price: P90 / P100 935-3231 / 938-3229-30

1 A LOVE STORY
2 SIGNOS
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 RISE

PIONEER Ticket Price P100 / P110 687-6379

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY 12:10 2:15 4:20 6:25 8:30
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM 1:15 3:45 6:15 8:40
3 A LOVE STORY 1:15 3:45 6:15 8:40
4 HAIRSPRAY 1:15 3:45 6:15 8:40

STA. ROSA Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 A LOVE STORY

LIPA Ticket Price: [illegible] P90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 OSS 117
2 A LOVE STORY
3 LICENSE to WED
4 THREE

DASMARIÑAS Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

IMUS [illegible] P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 A LOVE STORY

ANGELES Ticket Price: P90 / P95 (045) 892-2348

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STROY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 RUSH HOUR 3

TARLAC

1 A LOVE STORY
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 LICENSE to WED

STARMILLS Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (045) 875-1827

1 THREE
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY
5 SURF'S UP
6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 SURF'S UP
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 RESERVE

ILOILO Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 BLIND DATING
6 RISE

ACTIVITIES

AUGUST 26 (11:00AM) – "SURF'S UP" Mall Show
*Dance Number
*Meet & Greet / Photo Op with Cody
*Surfing Clinic by Stonemoney
*Games and Raffle
Robinsons Bacolod Mall Activity Area

'Demonizing' Angel Locsin

LOCSIN. What price gratitude?

By Nestor U. Torre

ANGELS AND DEMONS ARE supposed to be exact opposites, but Angel Locsin's detractors don't think so. In fact, ever since the actress left GMA-7 for ABS-CBN, some of them have been "demonizing" her. They depict her as an ingrate, because she left the TV channel that invested heavily in her and made her a big star.

In addition, Angel has been accused of "starring" in a sex video—a charge which recently was proven false. To find some space and peace to mull things over, Angel took a quickie fashion course abroad.

Big plans

She's back now, and ABS-CBN has big plans for her. Tit for tat, GMA-7 is now building up Marian Rivera, the new Marimar, and it looks like the comely actress is on her way to big-time stardom in her own right.

Now that the dust has settled, we can view the "Angel-demon" controversy with greater equanimity and objectivity, to wit: First off, we perfectly understand why GMA-7 reacted so strongly against Angel when she decided to leave for the proverbial greener pastures (and bigger bucks).

After all, the network did invest heavily in her, and showcased her in numerous TV series and films, which effectively made her one of the country's most popular and bankable young-adult actresses. Come contract-renegotiation time, it was right for the network to expect Angel to be grateful.

On the other hand, popular stars expect to get a raise when they renegotiate their contracts, and that too is understandable. Now, we don't know what the figures are in Angel's case, but the usual practice is for producers who build up talents to pay them only a modest amount.

They explain this by citing the huge investment they make in the new star's build-up campaign. And, in Angel's case, her former "mother network" adds that it also enabled the actress to make additional multi-millions in product endorsements, which should have compensated for her relatively modest contract earnings.

Additional factors

Apparently, however, this wasn't enough for Angel and her handlers, so she chose to leave. Additional factors could have been an inordinately hectic work schedule, lack of time left to develop her other talents and interests, etc. Well, now that Angel has "changed channels" careerwise, her mother studio should be expected to make up for this slack, and not just in terms of money—otherwise, what was all the pain and anger for?

GMA-7 is quite right to build up Marian or another new talent to replace Angel as its "signature" young star. As for ABS-CBN, the viewing public expects it to do even better in showcasing its hot, new property than her former network did.

But, the biggest expectations are of Angel herself. After putting everyone empathetically through the wringer these past weeks, her ABS-CBN and Star Cinema projects should be a decided improvement over her GMA-7 and GMA Films portrayals. If they don't pass muster, she'll have a lot of explaining to do.

Image

Postscript: Now that the Angel Locsin controversy has ebbed, one image remains in our mind: At the height of the *sturm und drang*, the hosts of a show biz talk show were commenting on Angel's "changing channels" move—and they confessed that they had *all* done the same thing at one time or other in their careers!

So, when all is said and done, what Angel did—like it or hate it—was pretty much par for the show biz course. Except, in her case, she was bigger than most and owed GMA-7 a lot because it had made her such a hot property. —But, aside from that, it was really (show) business as usual.

So, what price gratitude? These days, other factors intrude—like attitude, and plenitude— dude!

Redd Ochoa is hopeful . . .

From page G1

Inspired by the success of "Baliw," Redd put up his independent production company in Manila, Redd5Luke Entertainment Productions, which will create indie shorts, full-length features, documentaries, music videos and commercials.

Redd said that his fully-equipped production house will also lend a hand to upcoming indie filmmakers. Aspiring directors may contact him at Redd5LukeFilms@yahoo.com. He will also be conducting acting workshops.

Next project

After Montreal, Redd disclosed that he will spend a few days in New York to firm up plans for his next project. The bulk of the movie will be filmed in the Philippines, where he's staying more often these days. Here are excerpts of our interview via e-mail:

Can you comment on the significance of an international film festival like Montreal having as many as three entries from the Philippines?

It will make people realize that an industry that has been described as dying is no longer that—a newborn arising is more like it! I have seen scenes from "Foster Child" and "Ataul (Casket for Rent)." Both are powerful pieces, so I'm very proud that "Baliw" is in the same league. I don't aspire for awards or grants, I simply want recognition that my film was "made in the Philippines."

What does the resurgence of Filipino films at international festivals say about the growing importance of indie filmmaking in the country?

I believe that the growth of local indie filmmaking has been tremendous due to the digital explosion in the last few years. I'm glad that the digital age has reached us, and that young filmmakers are increasing. Though we're a bit behind in terms of technology, I'm glad that many filmmakers are making use of what they can get their hands on.

One problem is that, only a handful of movie theaters in the Philippines show independent films—a major obstacle to indie filmmakers! Finding a venue to play a low-budget film in Manila is like looking for a needle in a haystack. Everyone is afraid of "taking a risk" with indie flicks.

FABREGAS (top left, with Zach Villareal) in a scene from "Baliw."

What do you look forward to at the Montreal film fest?

Seeing more recognition for Philippine cinema. I can't wait to see the other entries that have been selected for this year's festival. There are movies from Germany, Great Britain and Korea that I'm really interested to check out.

Business aspect

I would be lying if I said that I'm not interested in marketing "Baliw" through an international distributor. I'm quite excited to sit down with distributors at the festival's Film Market and to take care of the business aspect. A few have contacted me and shown interest in the film's worldwide rights.

In what way is "Baliw" different from other Filipino indies?

I'm not comfortable comparing my movies with other indie films. I have incorporated some, as I would call it, justifiable violence, which I didn't see much of in recent indies. When I approached the MTRCB to get a classification for "Baliw" and it was immediately given an R-18, I didn't bother to appeal.

They were right. I myself wouldn't let a minor see "Baliw," not because of its story content, but because of its violence. However, I believe that violence is justified in the story.

Antithesis

What also makes "Baliw" different is that I made its love component the antithesis of what the masses are used to seeing in Filipino movies—I made the female "chase after" her male love interest!

Which Filipino films made the most impact on you?

Lino Brocka's "Bona" with Nora Aunor is a classic in its own right. "City After Dark" by Ishmael Bernal was an eye-opener for a budding filmmaker like me. Seeing Bernal's different characters with a very dark Manila as the backdrop is valuable education to a filmmaker. Chito S. Roño's "Dekada 70" also gives great inspiration in terms of style, especially in approaching a novelistic piece.

As a child, I was exposed to comedic icons such as Dolphy, Panchito, Palito, and Chiquito. I would sometimes cut classes with my mother to check out the latest flick of those comedians.

Even if the most movie projectors in Manila at the time were old and run-down units, I still took time to watch Dolphy or Chiquito's latest films. I can say that those movies gave me an appreciation for comedic timing. I still can't forget the chemistry between Tito, Vic, and Joey when they first started in the industry. It was like a combination of Martin and Lewis, but three-way.

Over the years, I was exposed to different Filipino movies, but no longer in theaters—through VHS tapes. I admired Bernal's "Working Girls," Mike de Leon's "Kisapmata," Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Muro Ami" and Joel Lamangan's "The Flor Contemplacion Story."

E-mail rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

Richard Gutierrez chooses his battles

By Rito P. Asilo

GUTIERREZ. Wants to make a difference.

RICHARD GUTIERREZ was calm and collected when we ran into him during a recent GMA-7 provincial sortie. It struck us how unaffected the dashing actor was even when he was besieged with touchy questions involving his controversial family—from his tabloid-magnet sister, Ruffa, to his consistently quotable mother, Annabelle Rama.

The young actor is charmingly accommodating, and his answers are surprisingly straightforward, but he also knows when—and how—to evade potentially combustible questions about volatile issues.

He readily admits that he's been in a two-year relationship with Georgina Wilson, who's currently studying in Australia, and he's quick to defend the beleaguered Angel Locsin, whom he considers "a dear friend."

Colorful love life

RAMA. Contrary to popular belief, she doesn't meddle in her son's personal affairs.

But, he also knows which battles to fight—and he chooses them well. For instance, he is understandably mum about his elder sister's colorful love life, although he also delivers a short albeit brisk pep talk about his being "supportive of whatever decisions would make *Ate* happy."

Richard discloses: "*Ate* Ruffa is busy again—she just signed a three-picture contract with Regal." Is it true that his mom will also be acting in one of those films? He answers, "Apparently, she is! *(Laughter)* It's just weird to see my mom doing that, because she hardly dabbles in acting. *Pero maganda at nakaka-aliw ang* project, and people should watch out for it!"

Mom Annabelle is always in the news: She's opinionated and feisty—a character with a colorful vocabulary. Is that how his mom is at home? Does she meddle in his personal affairs? Richard replies: "No, she doesn't really meddle—she dispenses advice, yes, but whose mother doesn't? And they're not unsolicited. You'd be surprised to know *na hindi sya ang tipo ng nanay na kumokontra.* —At least, *sa akin, ha! Ewan ko lang kay Ate! (Laughter)*"

Does he miss acting with identical twin brother, Raymond? He beams, "You know, I don't even remember how it was working with him, because back then, it wasn't really work—*para lang kaming naglalaro!*"

Screen partner

That was then, and this is now. At 23, Richard is one of GMA-7's biggest draws. And, although his most popular screen partner, Angel Locsin, has left their erstwhile mother studio, the actor remains close to the beleaguered actress. We spoke to Richard even before the big hullabaloo about Angel's imminent network transfer was blown out of proportion—and he was quick to defend her.

He explains his gallant stand: "I understand where she is coming from. *Hindi kasi nila alam kung ano talaga ang nararamdaman ni* Angel. Some people don't realize how hard some actors work—mentally and physically. All the public sees is the glitzy, glamorous aspect of this business. But, the down side to that is, we keep very long hours, and we juggle film and TV projects nonstop.

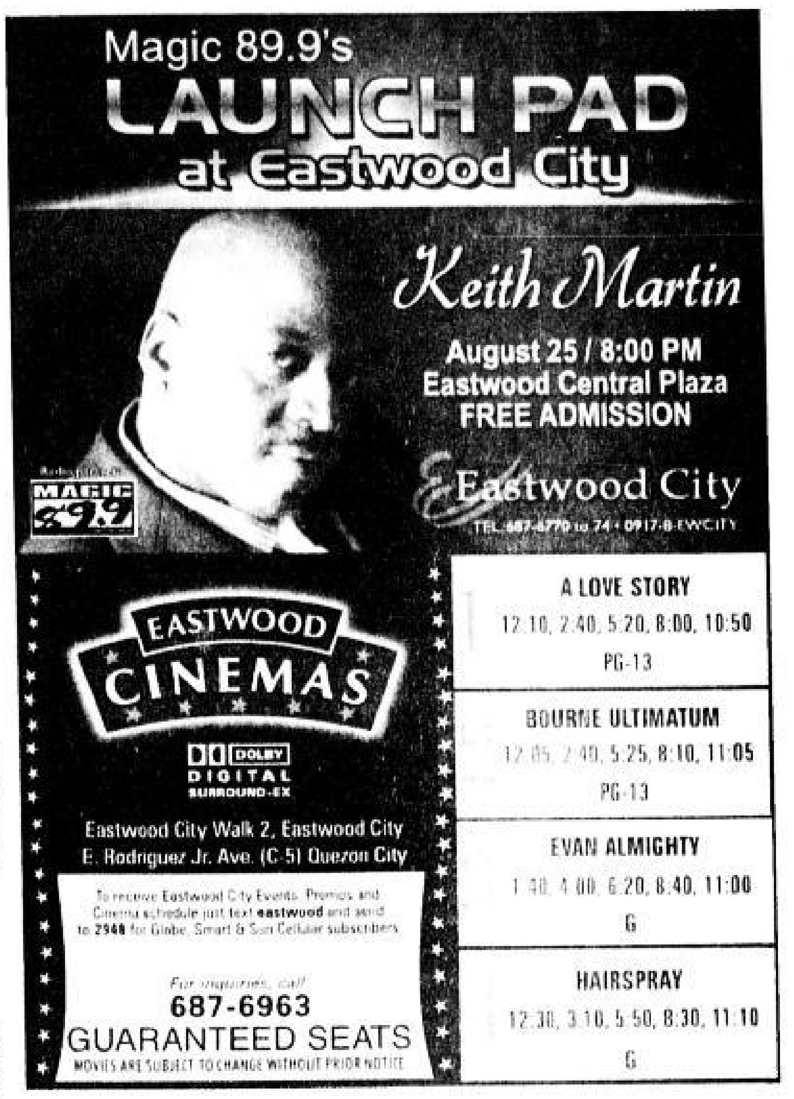
"I'm not privy to all the details of the issue. But, I feel bad about the incessant rap that Angel has been getting, because she's a good person. I admit, *mas lamang ako ng pahinga sa kanya. Siya, tuluy-tuloy talaga! Ako, merong* one or two months' off from work. So, I understand how she feels. She confided to me about how tired she was, so I told her that the London trip would be a welcome break for her. I don't think this would affect her popularity at all!"

Advocacy

Another battle that Richard is more than willing to face is geared for his latest advocacy—the environment. To say the least, the "greening" of Richard Gutierrez is a pleasantly surprising image-tweaking turn for the actor, who's known more for his conformist ways than his activist streak.

Richard is now a spokesperson of the environmental group, Greenpeace! But, stranger things are known to have happened in show business.

Richard explains: "Greenpeace's main concern is the preservation of our environment. It pushes for non-violent direct action against environmental abuse and destruction. For sometime, I've been wanting to do something that would make a difference. When you know what you do affects people in a positive way, it makes you feel good!"



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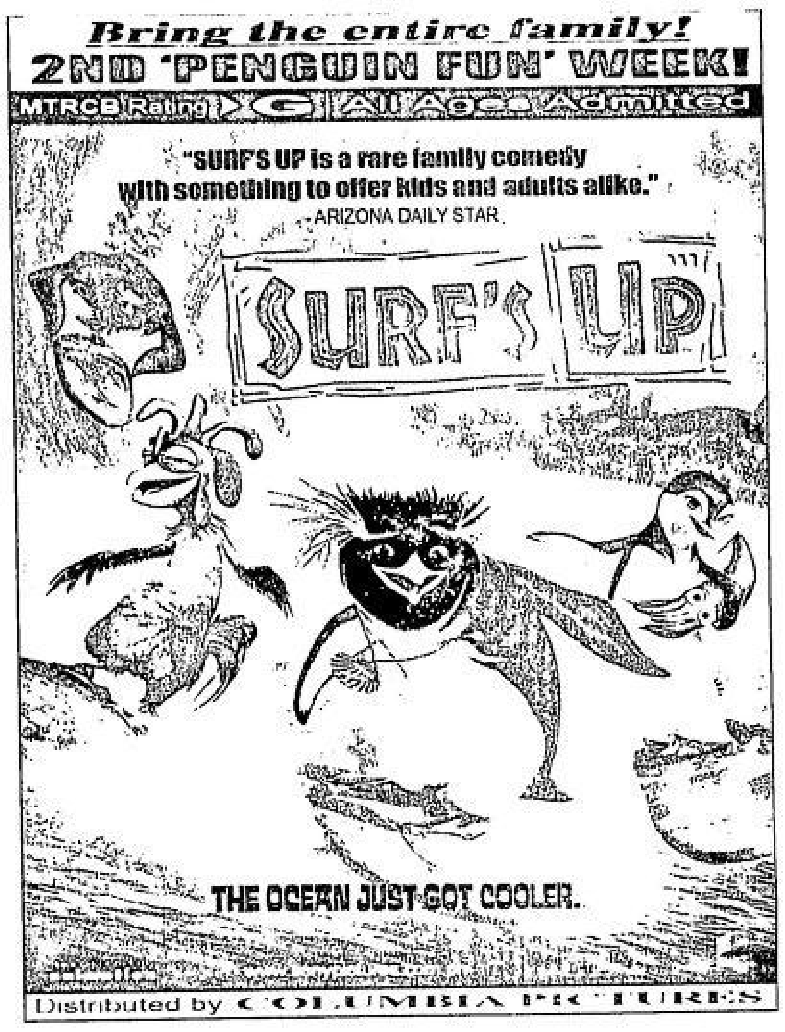

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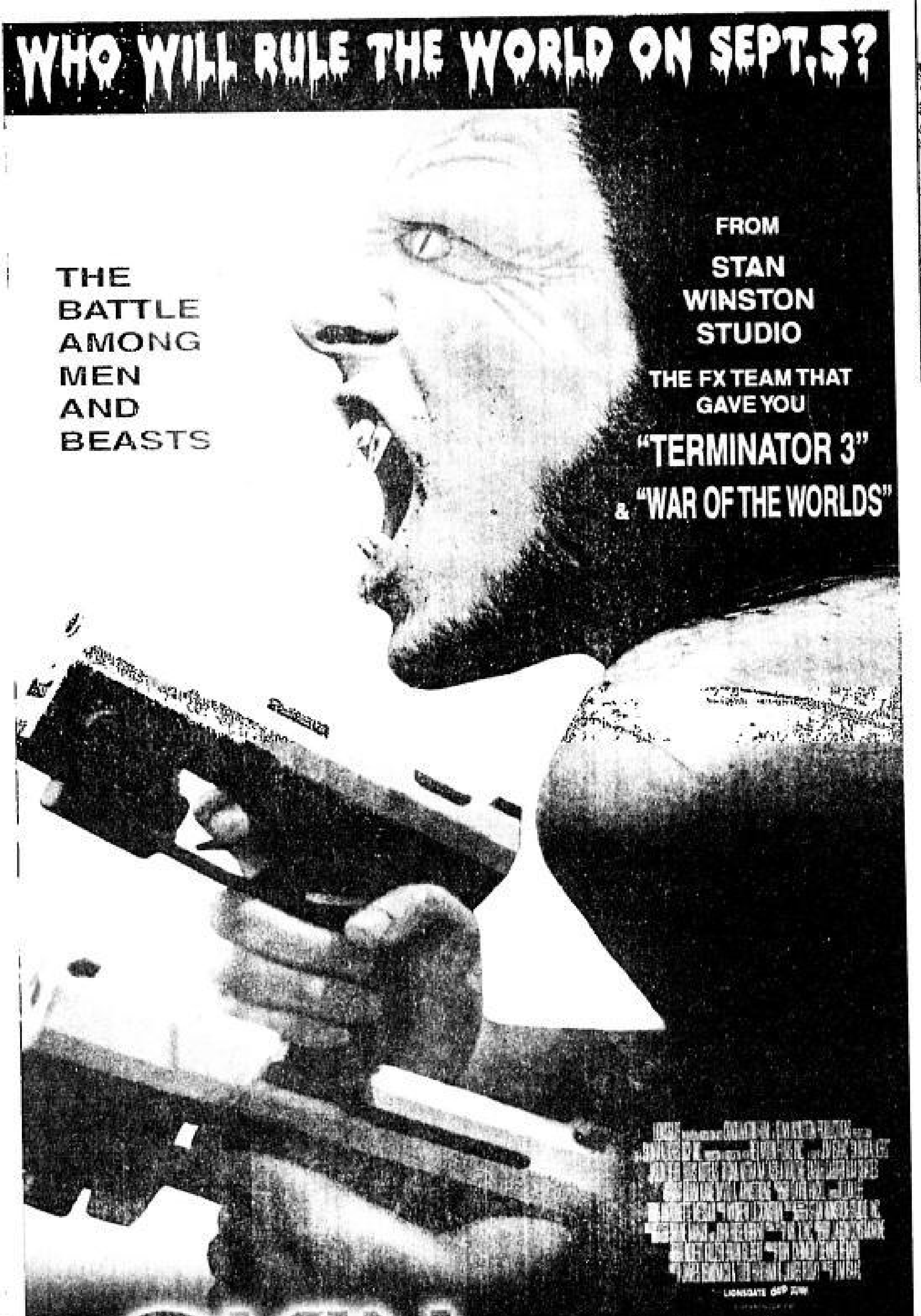

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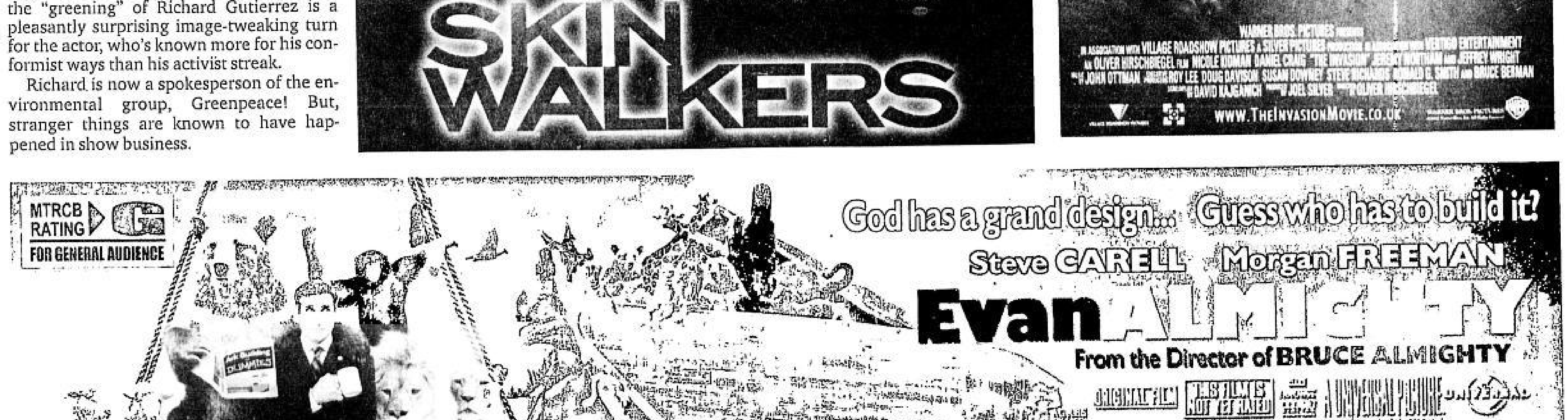

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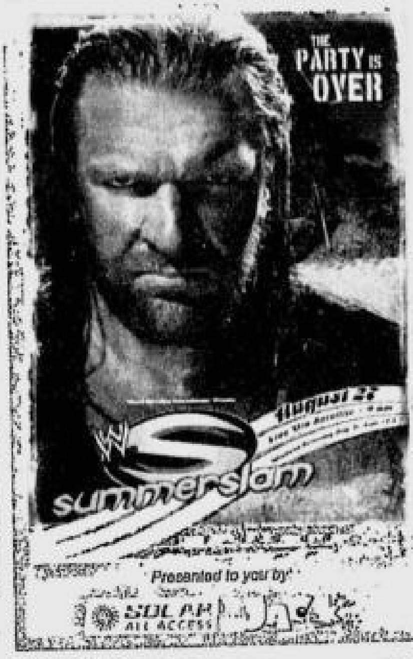

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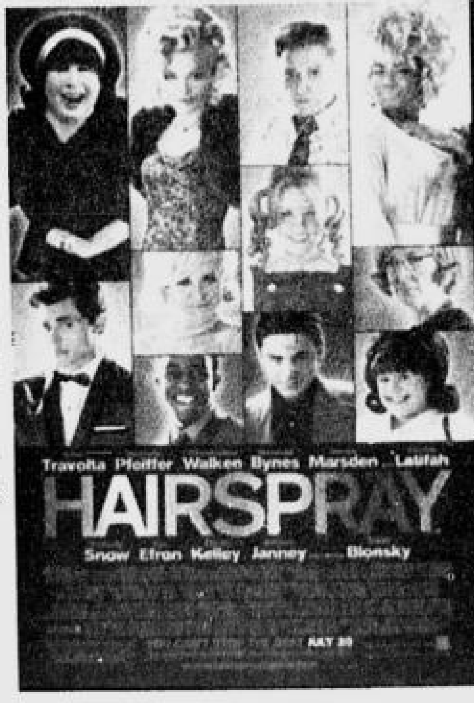
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Tracy Turnblad, a big girl with big hair and bigger heart, loves dancing and dreams of appearing in "The Corny Collins Show", Baltimore's hippest dance party on TV.

Tracy's determination flourished, despite her plus-size figure, much to the chagrin of the show's reigning princess, Amber Von Tussle, and her scheming mother, Velma, who runs the TV station. What makes Amber hate her more is that her sweetheart, Link Larkin, seems to be smitten with Tracy's charm as well.

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BHMG CEO Rebujio (inset) is proud of the surgical center's top-of-the-line facilities (above).

New kids on the medical block

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

THE BEVERLY HILLS MEDICAL Group (BHMG) is located at No. 57 Paseo de Roxas st., Makati City. It is managed by US-based CEO Maria M. Rebujio, who has over 25 years of experience in multi-specialty surgery—particularly in the field of plastic and reconstructive surgery.

Rebujio put up her own multi-specialty surgical center in Beverly Hills, California. She developed the Beverly Hills Advanced Surgery Institute (BHASI), which later became a multi-specialty ambulatory surgery center.

Frequent visits

With husband George, Maria often visited Manila. Those frequent visits made her wonder if a similar multi-specialty surgical center here would be feasible.

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MEDICAL specialists (from left): Dr. Aser Acosta, Dr. Jayjay Cruz, Dr. Eric Arcilla, Dr. Jun Bermate, Dr. Glenn Genuino, Dr. Maisa Catindig, Dr. Tristan Catindig, Dr. Deedle Nable-Aguilera and Dr. Stanley Kho.

Discovering the goodness in others

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO constantly complain about others' faults. Contrastingly, there are those who see the underlying goodness in human beings. The things that make a difference in life are not based solely on economic, educational or physical status, but also on how we perceive life. Here's a thought-provoking story about a king and his two servants:

Once upon a time, a king ordered his servant to find a good man in his kingdom. The servant promised he would. Eagerly, he met with different types of people.

Flaw

But, each time, he saw a flaw—they were either disrespectful, lazy or irresponsible. His quest continued for six months. Finally, he went back to the king, frustrated.

The servant cried, "My king, I couldn't find a good man—and this makes me very sad. They all have rotten hearts! But, I shall fulfill my word. There's only one good man I know…me!"

This did not please the king. Thus, he called another servant and asked him to find him a bad man. So, the servant went forth to bars and prisons.

He observed, "The drunkards couldn't even hurt a fly. And look at the prisoners—they're digging wells and planting trees! They may have been bad once, but they're now working hard for everyone's benefit!"

After six months, the frustrated servant went back to the king and said, "My king, I have not found a really bad man—and this makes me happy! No heart is really all that bad. But, I shall fulfill my word. There's but one bad man I know…me!"

Moral

The moral of this tale: A good man sees the good in all, but a bad man only sees what's wrong. We're all children of the Supreme Good Father. Thus, we also possess His inherent goodness. But, our hearts are often clouded by materialistic desires that make us envious, exploitative and arrogant.

Clean this "pollution" by chanting the different names of the Supreme. His holy names will bring out the good in all of us. With pure heart and humility, we will see the goodness of others as we acknowledge our own imperfections!

Not enough . . .

From page G5

divine retribution, then you know that he'll get his comeuppance in the end.

Yes, there are good comedians in this movie. What's missing, then? Well, everything else—comic timing, fresh jokes, and a plot that makes sense.

Director Tom Shadyac, who also helmed "Bruce Almighty," used his actors badly, exhausted what few jokes there were, and didn't even try to make visual puns.

While it's not bad enough to send you screaming toward the exits, "Evan Almighty" is not all that mighty, after all.

Not enough comedic verve to Carell's latest starrer

By Noelani Torre

IF THERE'S ANYTHING ALMIGHTY about the movie, "Evan Almighty," it's the budget. At a cool $175 million, this purportedly makes it the most expensive comedy ever made—it's too bad the amount of laughs isn't directly proportional to the amount of greenbacks spent.

A big budget is not the most important element of comedy. To make a good comedy film, you need talented comedians, flawless comic timing, and fresh, effective jokes.

Steve Carell, who plays the titular character in this sequel to "Bruce Almighty," has proven himself to be a considerably talented comedian.

Pompous anchorman

In the first film, his hilarious performance as a pompous anchorman was one of the movie's highlights, and he has since gone on to star in the enormously successful "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" and the hit TV series, "The Office."

In "Evan Almighty," however, not even his comedic gifts can save this leaky boat from sinking. Admittedly, the premise of "Evan Almighty" is interesting: Here, Carell reprises his role as TV newsman Evan Baxter, who has just been elected to Congress on the strength of the slogan, "Change the World."

He packs up his family, composed of his wife (Lauren Graham of "Gilmore Girls") and three sons (Johnny Simmons, Graham Phillips and Jimmy Bennett), leaves Buffalo, NY, and moves into a McMansion in Virginia. He has a plush, new office and a powerful senior congressman (Rep. Long), who's asked him to cosponsor a publicity-worthy bill. In short, except for the need to spend more quality time with his family, life is good for Evan.

Then God, in the form of Morgan Freeman, comes along and tells him to build an ark—because the flood's coming!

Animals

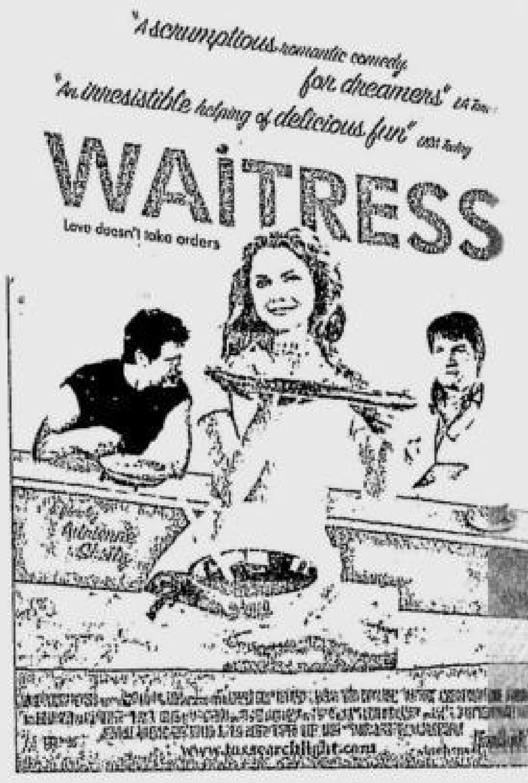
Before he can say "Noah," animals in pairs start following Evan around, big loads of wood are delivered to his house, his beard grows back as soon as he shaves it off, and Old Testament-like robes start appearing in his closet!

Evan soon becomes a congressional laughingstock and his family can't understand him, but he still has to keep building the ark because, for one thing, the animals have to be put somewhere.

The villain of the piece is Congressman Long (John Goodman), whose bill seeks to effect the private acquisition of national parklands for development purposes. Since this movie is about

NOT/ G4

CARELL. His movie is the most expensive comedy ever made.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Zac Efron
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introducing Nikki Blonsky

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AT THE CINEMAS

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GREENBELT 1	1 A LOVE STORY	2 EVAN ALMIGHTY					
GREENBELT 3	1 THX HAIRSPRAY GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX EVAN ALMIGHTY GUARANTEED SEATS	3 SURF'S UP GUARANTEED SEATS	4 RUSH HOUR 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM GUARANTEED SEATS		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 HAIRSPRAY	3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	4 SURF'S UP	5 RUSH HOUR 3		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 LICENSE TO WED	3 A LOVE STORY	4 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 A LOVE STORY	2 HAIRSPRAY	3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	4 EVAN ALMIGHTY	5 RUSH HOUR 3		
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AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

glorietta	Ansons Exhibit August 20 to September 2, 2007 at the Activity Center
GREENBELT	Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peek presents Collection of Avatar August 20 to September 10, 2007 at the Greenbelt 3 Lobby
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Alabang Town Center Grand Grocery Shopping Spree Promo July 1 to August 31, 2007; Mallwide
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Symposium for soon-to-be mothers August 25, 2007 at the Activity Center
MARKET! MARKET!	Laguna Expo August 20 to 26, 2007 at the Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Elements Photoconstructed Realities August 16 to 29, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Luxury Car Exhibits August 24 to 30, 2007 at the Activity Center

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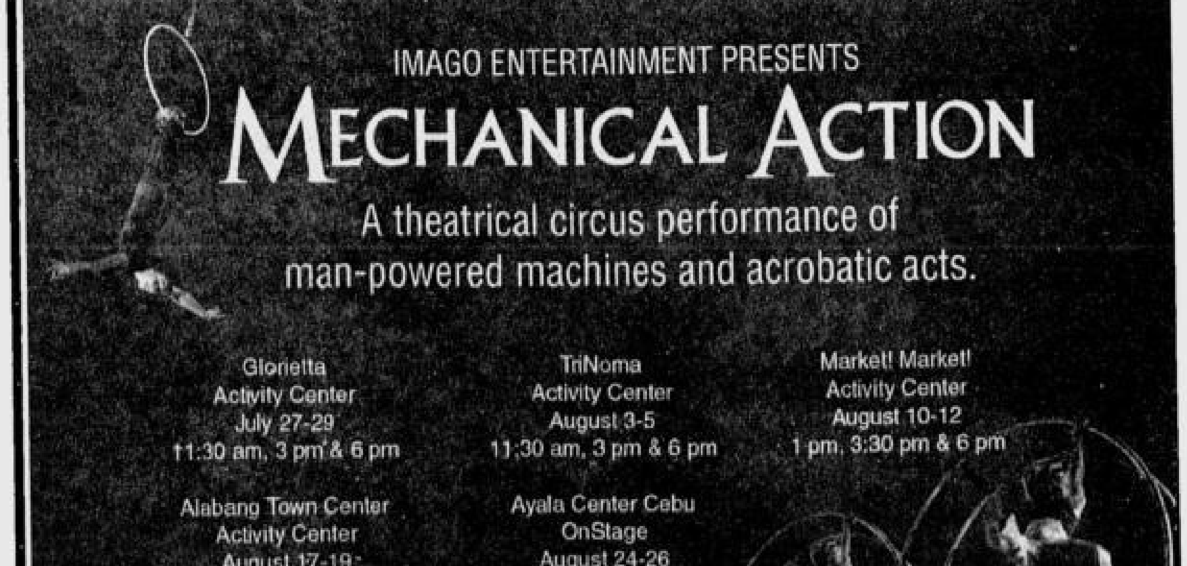

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TriNoma Activity Center
August 3-5
11:30 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

Market! Market! Activity Center
August 10-12
1 pm, 3:30 pm & 6 pm

Alabang Town Center Activity Center
August 17-19
11 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

Ayala Center Cebu OnStage
August 24-26
1 pm, 4 pm & 6:30 pm

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

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Our Home has built a reputation of being the best furniture concept store in the country Celebrating its 10th year in the business. Our Home is committed to providing its costumers the best products and services by constantly sourcing high quality merchandise at affordable prices and offering numerous promotions and activities like the "Price Drop Sale With 17 branches nationwide. more people are now able to enjoy high quality. contemporary furniture and accessories at reasonable prices.

Our Home has endured competition since it started. Early on, Our Home made it a point to differentiate themselves by coming up with unique ideas to reach its costumers. Our Home pioneered the idea of a "lifestyle furniture concept store" wherein the items for sale are styled in a way that can give both the customers, as well as the interior designers, an idea of how a room would look like even before they leave the store. Our Home was also the first to introduce designer collections for both furniture and accessories. Famous designers and architects like Rajo Laurel. Dan Lichauco and Tito Villanueva have put their names and talents into producing items exclusively for Our Home customers

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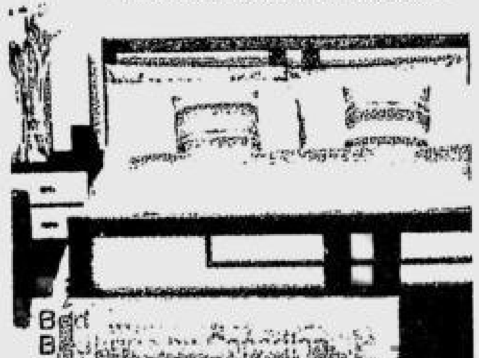

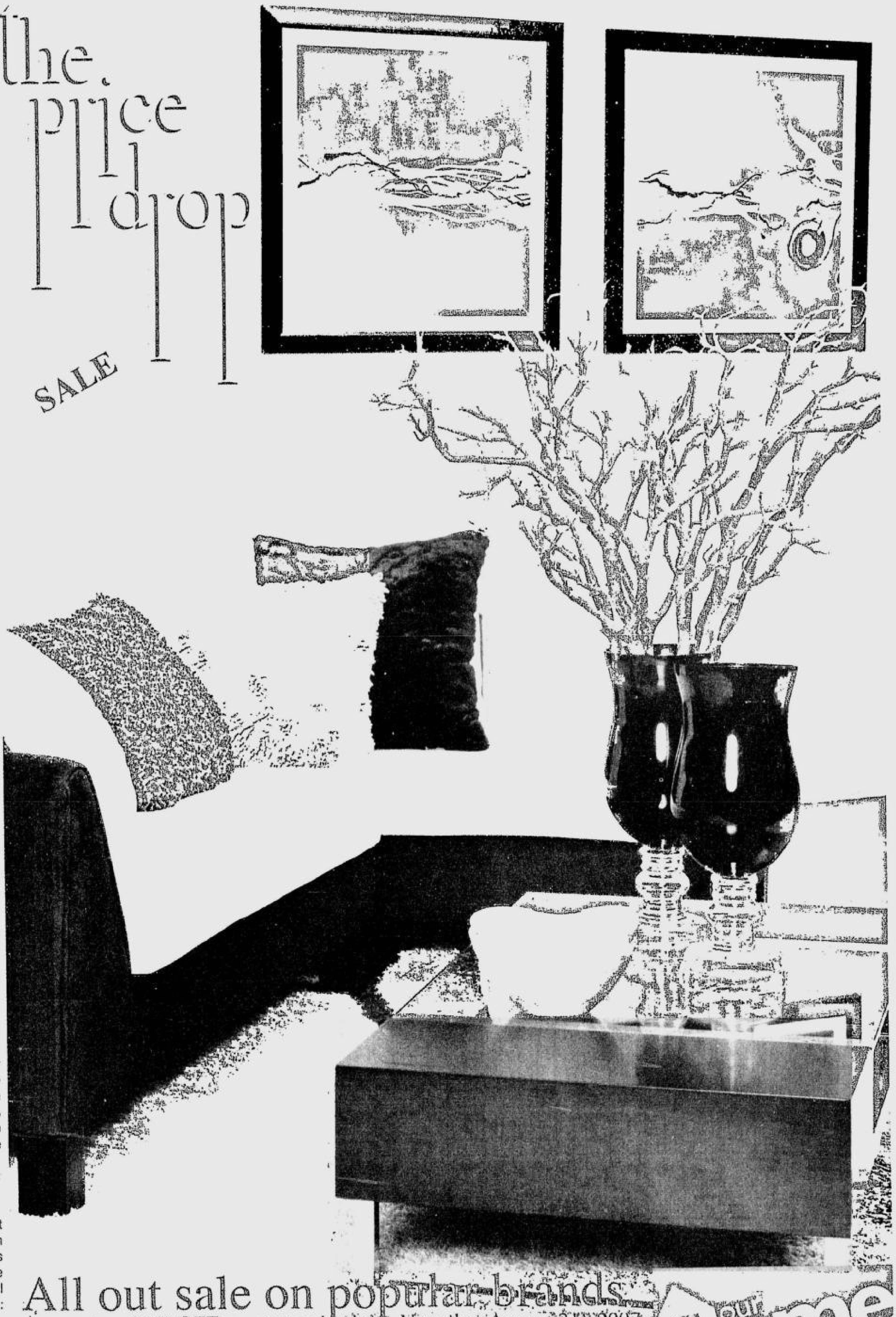

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